

# Bandwagon

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A Truly  
**BIG**  
Show



Miss  
**MABEL**  
**STARK**  
WORLD'S FOREMOST  
TRAINER OF FEROCIOUS  
JUNGLE BEASTS

MAY JUNE 1968



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Fred D. Pfening, Jr., Editor

Joseph T. Bradbury, Fred D. Pfening, III Associate Editors

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#### THIS MONTH'S COVER

The litho on our cover this issue is published in honor of Mable Stark, who died recently. An obituary of Miss Stark appears elsewhere in this issue.

The poster was used by the Barnes show around 1934 and is from the Pfening Collection.

#### MILWAUKEE PARADE CANCELLED

The Circus World Museum-Schlitz parade will not be held in Milwaukee this July fourth. Exposure of the hundreds of draft horses, ponies, elephants and people to possible riots seemed too great a risk, so there will be no march.

HOWEVER, the train will move to Milwaukee on June 29, 1968 and a six day circus festival will be held at the lakefront showgrounds as usual.

More acts and entertainment have been scheduled to round out the period while the Baraboo equipment is in Milwaukee.

#### INFORMATION NEEDED

I need help. If you have any information pertaining to a collection of circus posters sold to Mr. George Milkey, Bookseller, Greenfield, Mass., please contact me. Any information at all will be appreciated.

#### BETTY SCHMID, CIRCUSIANA

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No. 1705	Ralph B. Johnson 244 Edgewood Ave. Westfield, N. J. 07090
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#### THE CHS GOES WEST IN AUGUST

The Circus Historical Society will combine with the Circus Model Builders in a Conventional atmosphere at Anaheim, California, August 6, 7, and 8, 1968. Your President, following discussion with several of the other officers, completed arrangements with the Al. G. Barnes Ring of the CMB, the hosts of their National Gathering, during the early part of May at which time their endorsement of the joint affair met with approval and enthusiasm.

The Convention will be held in the new Convention Center at Anaheim, California, during the first three days of the eight day stand of the Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey Circus, in the Grand Lobby of the Center. Immediately adjacent to the lobby, is the circular roofed arena with a seating capacity of 6,500 where the Circus will be presented. The Convention center rests on a 40 acre site, directly opposite to the awe inspiring Disneyland.

Mr. Al Halpern, 1802 Chanticleer Rd., Anaheim, California, 92804, is the General Chairman for the CMB Gathering and advises in-

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tered persons who plan to attend to contact the Anaheim Tourist and Convention Bureau, 800 W. Kataella Avenue, Anaheim, California and request a list of hotels and motels and rates for August. Reservations are almost a must because August is the height of the tourist season.

We are fortunate to have an opportunity to meet with so many of our members in this western area. It was exactly 10 years ago, at Dover, Ohio, when these two Circus Organizations met before in jointure session.

Your President has appointed Albert Conover, photographer; and Fred Pfening, Jr., reporter to cover the Convention. Both of these gentlemen have accepted and plan to attend. I also will be there and so will your Vice President, Richard Conover. Tentative arrangements call for a joint banquet to be held on the night of August 9, one day after the National Gathering is over.

The Circus Historical Society would like in 1969 to return to the mid-west and make plans this Fall for a gala event.

Gaylord Hartman, President

The Society wishes to express its sincere thanks to Past President Robert Parkinson, of Baraboo, Wisconsin, for the fine Roster which should now be in each members' possession. There was much editing and correspondence, as well as several phone calls necessary to the assembling of all the material for this handy little booklet. As in any human effort mistakes occur. Members of the State of New Jersey you are in Division #3, but when the Rosters were received for mailing we regretfully found your State omitted. Please forgive this error. We also wish to thank everyone who helped in the tremendous task of compiling, editing, printing and mailing our Roster.

Gaylord Hartman, President

In addition to the Anaheim Gathering, there are many Circuses to be seen in or near your own City. Also remember these locations, Baraboo Wisconsin, Peru, Indiana,

Fryberg, Maine, Sarasota, Florida, and Milwaukee, Wisconsin. At Milwaukee the Train of Many Circuses will appear, June 29 and for six days, events at the assembly area will include a continuous Circus performance, special events, wagon displays with draft horses as well as the renewal of our friendships with those of the Circus World Museum. Later in July, 17-20 there is the Circus City Festival at Peru, Indiana. In your area you may learn of special CMB Lot Gatherings. The CFA will hold their Convention at Shreveport, Louisiana, Sept. 12-14. Let us help the Circus help itself, whether it is a small display, museum, tented, open or indoor the world's greatest uncensored entertainment, The Circus, as it speaks its beautiful universal language of enjoyment.

Gaylord Hartman, President

#### MEL MILLER WITH RINGLING-BARNUM

After eleven years of association with the Ringling Museum of the Circus, Sarasota, Florida, Melvin C. Miller, Jr., resigned as curator. Beginning as a volunteer, then as a part-time consultant, Miller was appointed full time curator in 1961.

Almost singlehandedly and sometimes with opposition Mel moved the museum into the first rate status. The backyard exhibit of the Ringling Barnum show in 1938 is the finest display of its kind anywhere. This was conceived and built under Miller's loving guidance.

Following the Museum's announcement of his leaving there was a brief period of no news concerning Miller's future plans. However after visiting with Mel during the Venice opening in January it really came as no surprise when he "joined out" with the big show.

Irvin Feld, president of Big Bertha, created the new position of Director of Special Exhibitions, and appointed Miller to the job. He will build a collection and display for the show, probably in Venice.

#### PHOTO IDENTIFIED

Subscriber Robert Hasson, Tampa, Florida, writes to identify the photo of the side show opening on the cover of the last issue.

Hasson, who was a ticket seller with the Ringling-Barnum side show at the time, says the talker is John "Doc" Oyler. Oyler had been side show manager of the 101 Ranch before joining the big show as assistant side show manager in 1937.

#### AVAILABLE BACK ISSUES OF BANDWAGON MAGAZINE

1961	March-April
	Sept.-Oct.-Nov.
	December
1962	March-April
	July-August
	September-October
	November-December
1963	January-February
	March-April
	May-June
	July-August
	September-October
	November-December
1964	January-February
	March-April
	May-June
	July-August
	September-October
	November-December
1965	January-February
	March-April
	May-June
	July-August
	November-December
1966	All six issues.
1967	To date.

All back issues are \$1.00 each and will be mailed postpaid. Mail check to:

Circus Historical Society, Inc.  
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## GONE ARE THE DAYS--limited edition Circus Printfolio No. 1



Ten 8 x 10" matte finish deluxe prints of the Ringling-Barnum train taken in the early 1950's. This limited edition of one hundred units will be on a first come-first served basis. This is truly a printfolio bound in a special booklet form, for discriminating collectors.

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# GOLLMAR BROS. CIRCUS

**SEASON OF 1924-1925**

By Joseph T. Bradbury

## FOREWORD

The following article is somewhat unusual in several respects. First, I cannot in memory recall a show so small and insignificant in circus history for which such a wealth of factual and documentary evidence has turned up on. As Tom Parkinson says, "It is amazing the amount of material on this show we have uncovered." Secondly, the real credit for this article should go to member William L. (Bill) Elbirt who received a commission from the Bandwagon editor back in 1962 to write the history of the 1924-25 Gollmar show and 1926 Heritage Bros. Circus. Elbirt did all of the research, contacting several people who were on these shows, plus digging into every known source of research. He struck pure gold when he discovered in the Ringling Circus Musum in Sarasota the original files on the Gollmar 1924-25 show from the Peru office of the late Jerry Mugivan. Mel Miller, Curator of the Ringling Museum, kindly loaned Elbirt all of this material. Many of these documents, letters, etc. are reproduced exactly as the originals.

When Elbirt joined the advance of the Beatty-Cole show in 1965 he found it would be impossible for him to complete the article although he had finished his research. He forwarded all of this material to me and requested that I write the article, which I have done. It will appear

in two separate parts. The first will be on the 1924-25 Gollmar show, the second on the 1926 Heritage Bros. Circus. The two shows of course are very closely connected since the physical property of the Gollmar show was used to frame Heritage. There will be several cross references to data as well as photos between the two articles. The Heritage article will follow in a few months. Although the documentation here is somewhat detailed and lengthy I feel it was too important to leave any of it out because with it we have almost a complete picture of both a typical tunnel car show and small flat car show of the period. The only thing really lacking is photographs. An appeal for additional illustrations will be made at end of the article.

Joe Bradbury

Gollmar Bros. was an old and honored circus title of the past. For 26 years it was used continuously on the circus owned and operated by the Gollmar brothers of Baraboo, Wisconsin. This famous title however was last used in 1925 on a circus far below the high standards of circus qual-

Photo No. 1 — John Robinson's Circus advance car, Season of 1922. Although this car was not one of the 3 advance cars purchased by Gollmar Bros. in 1924 note how easily this type of car, which is already equipped with end loading doors, could be converted into a tunnel car. George Piercy Collection.

ity and ethical business operations always maintained by the Gollmars. The use of the title in 1924 and 1925 which came about through legal although extra-ordinary circumstances caused considerable grief to the Gollmars. A year after this show fell apart in the fall of 1925 the title reverted back to its original owners and has not been used again on a circus. This is the story of the Gollmar Bros. Circus of 1924-25.

The Gollmars of Baraboo followed their cousins, the Ringlings, into the circus business 7 seasons later, and put out their first show in 1891, a moderate size wagon circus. It was successful and grew steadily and in 1903 went on rails. The show was up to 22 cars at its peak and became a major circus in the Mid-West. The Gollmar's operated it through the 1916 season and during the winter sold the physical equipment and gave a one year lease on the title to James Patterson of Paola, Kansas, a well known carnival operator. Using the title of Gollmar Bros. and James Patterson Combined Circus the new owner had the show on the road for a single season, 1917.

In early 1922 the Gollmars granted a 5 year lease of their title to Jerry Mugivan of the American Circus Corporation. The actual lease was made to the Howes Great London Shows Company, one of Mugivan's companies, which operated in 1921 a 25 car circus titled "Howes' Great London Circus and Van Amburg's Trained Wild Animals" and was one of the four circuses operated by Mugivan and his partners, Bert Bowers, and Edward Ballard, that season. It was understood that the Gollmar title would be placed on the physical property that used the Howes-Van Amburg name in 1921. This was a fine 25 car show comparable in size and performance with that of the original Gollmar show. One of the brothers, Fred Gollmar, went along with the title and took over the job of heading the advance for the 1922 show. He





had been in advance of the old show and knew the territory well.

Following the 1922 season Mugivan and his partners decided to cut down the number of their shows to go out in 1923 from four to three. The Gollmar show and title was shelved. It was not used at all in 1923 although Mugivan still had rights to its use for four more years.

Circus business for the first few years following World War I had been both good and bad. The first two seasons, 1919 and 1920, were big money winners that saw a lot of new shows take to the road. The next two seasons about finished off these newcomers as the sharp economic recession of 1921 was rough on circus business and 1922 was a season filled with labor unrest with major widespread strikes in the coal and railroad industries, causing all kinds of difficulties for circuses. By 1923 things had settled down and business was getting back to normal with most shows coming in with good profits. The small rail shows did especially well in 1923 and the following 1924 season looked like the right time for one Chester James Monahan to get into the circus game.

Monahan had been connected with circuses for a number of years. He had the reserve seats on Kit Carson Buffalo Ranch Wild West Show in 1913 but in recent years had mainly worked for Jerry Mugivan on his shows usually handling the connection ticket sales. (Ticket boxes located in connection between menagerie and big top which sold reserves). Monahan had had one year of experience as a circus owner when he and his partner, Herb Duval operated a 2 car show in 1918 using the title of Howes Great London Show which they secured from Mugivan as he kept his show bearing the Howes title in the barn for the 1918 and 1919 seasons. The flu epidemic in the fall of 1918 closed Monahan's Howes show early and it pulled into Hot Springs, Ark. where it sat until early 1919. The late Bill Woodcock once told me that he saw the 2 cars many times when they were parked in Hot Springs. He said they were painted a solid orange

**Photo No. 3 — One of the Gollmar Bros. 1924-25 tunnel cars parked in Peru Quarters rail yards. Photo taken sometime after Sept. 15, 1925. Woodcock Collection.**

but had no lettering. The show had a team of horses, a pony, and a small elephant.

Monahan approached his old boss, Jerry Mugivan, in the early spring of 1924 and secured his willingness to help equip and finance a railroad, tunnel car type, circus to go out that season.

Monahan selected Wabash, Indiana, which is only about 15 miles from Mugivan's big quarters in Peru, as site to frame his new show. It might be recalled that Wabash had experienced some circus activity back during the winter of 1917-18 when the Service Motor Truck Co. located in Wabash had the contract to furnish the motors and truck chassis for the Coop & Lent Circus of 1918 which was the first large scale attempt to put out a full and complete motorized circus. (See account of this in the Epilog)

Frederick C. Bahler, who currently lives in Wabash, remembered the show when it was framed in the winter of 1923-24 and caught the opening stand in Wabash on May 3, 1924. Mr. Bahler writes as follows:

"This outfit came to Wabash from Peru during the winter of 1923-24 and set up shop in what had been at one time a horse sale and boarding barn, located on the northeast corner of Miami and Water Streets. The barn was named, 'Tie in Sale and Feed Barn.'

"The show was framed along the dog and pony show lines and during the winter training took place in what had been the sale ring in the barn. Numerous times I went down there and watched the various acts that were being put in shape.

"In the spring of 1924 the show opened in Wabash on a lot on South Carroll Street that for years had been the Wabash Ball Park. As I remember they had a good layout, in that it looked like big time stuff, and caused one to wonder how it all could

go into the small number of cars they had."

Mr. Bahler also kindly went thru the newspaper files in Wabash and extracted the following most interesting article.

#### WABASH PLAIN DEALER

April 4, 1924

#### "WABASH HAS 2-RING CIRCUS"

Animals, and tent, railroad cars, and entire circus paraphenalia located here, preparatory to road trip soon.  
QUARTERED AT UNION TRANSFER BARNS HERE.

Cars in Big Four yards being painted; will carry name—HARRIS BROS.—on first trip out.

"Wabash has a circus. A real honest to goodness big tent circus, too, with railroad cars, animals, and men and women performers, and everything. The circus is Harris Bros.

"The opening date is the latter part of April. The first performances are to be given in Wabash. Then the show is to be on its way into the Northwest. Twenty-eight employees are quartered in true circus style in the large barns of the Union Transfer Company on South Miami Street; meals are served there, and the men have their own bunks for sleeping.

#### Preair Circus

"In the Big Four yards, three circus cars are being repainted, and put into shape for a road season. Of the three one is a Sells-Floto, and the other a Gollmar Bros. Two other railroad cars are due within the next few days, one from Chicago, and the other from St. Louis. Harris Bros. name is to be placed on the cars, and the way things are coming on the show may require seven cars, instead of the five originally planned.

#### Buy Animals

"Camels, elephants and lions are to be brought over soon from Peru. They have been purchased from the Sells-Floto and John Robinson Circuses, which winter in Peru. Nine ponies are in the stables going through daily training, and twenty more ponies are enroute. Wild animal cages are being built, and painted in Wabash. Inside the great barn is a scene of hustle and bustle, and everyone hurrying to get ready for the opening date the last of this month.

"Visitors are not permitted now—but a little later, when things are better organized, and there is more to be seen visiting hours will be established, so that everyone may have a peep to know what is going on.

#### Two Ring Circus

"Harris Bros. is an old circus, but it

has been off the road for several years. It is to be a two ring trained animal circus, when it takes the road again. Wabash was chosen for winter quarters because of its closeness to Peru, where many of the animals were purchased; because of the exceptionally large barn furnished good training quarters, and because this is a central location for starting out a traveling organization.

"Present plans are to have the Harris Bros. Circus winter here every year."

This article which says title of the show will be Harris Bros. poses an interesting question. Did Monahan at first plan to use the Harris title but later secured rights from Mugivan to use Gollmar Bros? My first thoughts were that perhaps Harris Bros. was a paper house title available. It was common practice for small shows in those days to use the titles of former shows for which various paper houses had in stock a considerable amount of billing material at bargain prices. The King brothers and E. H. Jones frequently did this kind of thing. Possibly some paper from the old W. H. Harris or another Harris show was available. Strangely enough it turned out that for the 1924 season Floyd and Howard King used the title of Harris Bros. on their own 5 car tunnel car type circus, and although in the past they had made widespread use of paper house titles, in the case of Harris Bros. Floyd King says he and his brother just made that one up. This being true then I am unable to account for how the local newspaper in Wabash came up with the Harris name. No doubt the reporter got some erroneous information somehow.

Anyway, a week later the paper had the correct facts as indicated in the following article. The listing of acts is the best account of the 1924 performance thus far located. Of course the "50 trained ponies and 50 trained monkeys" must be taken as pure press agent chatter.

#### WABASH PLAIN DEALER

April 12, 1924

#### "LOCAL CIRCUS OPENS MAY 3.

Gollmar Bros. Trained Wild Animal Show is rapidly shaping plans for season; May make Wabash permanent winter quarters.

"MEN WELL PLEASED WITH TREATMENT.

"All executives and performers are ex-

perienced showmen; Animals being trained and cages built at Miami Street barns.

"Gollmar Bros. Trained Wild Animal Circus is rapidly being gotten into shape for its opening in Wabash May 3. If there are no changes in present plans, Wabash will continue to be winter quarters for the show.

It is to have two rings, an elevated stage, and a huge steel arena for performing wild animals. The tent will have a seating capacity of 3000. There will be a side show, and all of the many features connected with the modern day circus.

Three camels came to winter quarters on South Miami Street this week, and four elephants will be brought from Peru, probably today. (Author's note, this would more correctly be 2 camels and 3 elephants.)

Gollmar Bros. is working entirely independent of the circus organization in Peru, but is owned by Howe's Great London Shows, which is one of the amusement enterprises controlled by Jerry Mugivan, and his associates, now the real circus kings of America, having the Sells-Floto, John Robinson, Hagenbeck-Wallace, Howes Great London Shows, and a number of other tented amusements under their ownership and direction.

#### Reorganize Here

Gollmar Bros. Circus was off the road last year, and the title was laid up for the season. Now the reorganization is being accomplished in Wabash.

Five railroad cars are receiving new coats of paint, which is to be a Pullman green when finished. The work is being done in the Big Four yards just west of the shops.

All executives and performers with Gollmar Bros. this season are experienced showmen. A number are quartered at the Tremont Hotel, others are at the winter quarters on South Miami Street, and still others are to come to Wabash within the next few days.

Animals are being trained and cages are being built and painted in the barns on Miami Street. The "cats" will not be brought from Peru until nearly time for the show to open.

"We like Wabash and have had fine treatment here," said one of the Gollmar Bros. men. "If we can make satisfactory arrangements for the quarters we have, there is no reason for us not wintering here every year. We are close to the business district, which is an advantage, and

**Photo No. 2 — Advance cars of John Robinson and Sells-Floto are parked side by side at Marietta, Ohio, July 4, 1920. The Sells-Floto car was later used as a tunnel car by Gollmar Bros. in 1924-25. Author's collection.**

our geographical location is good. Our organization has to make good on its own hook. For that reason we would rather be away from the other circuses in Peru."

#### Circus Personnel

"The personnel already here includes C. J. Monahan, general manager; Henry W. Link, general agent; H. D. Carney, contracting agent and press manager; S. B. Warren, advertising car manager; Jasper Fulton, press agent back with the show; Ray Dick, sideshow manager; Frank P. Meister, band master; Fred Bickel, advertising manager.

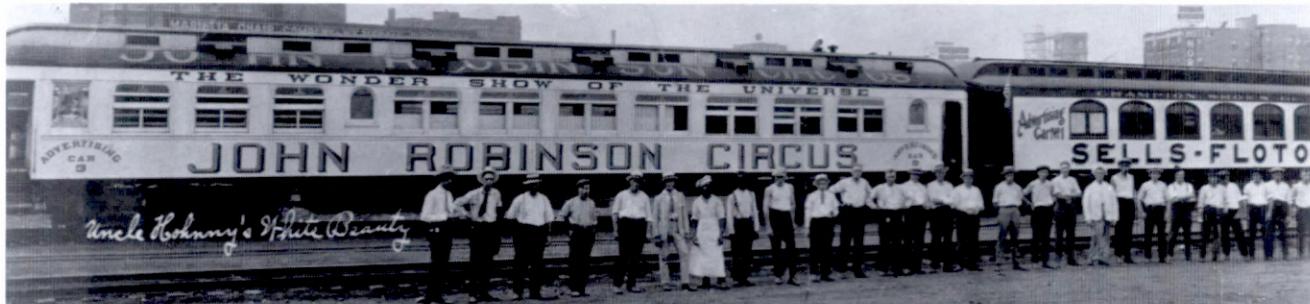
Toto, one of the elephants going with Gollmar Bros. has spent much of his time in New York with the famous Singer Midgets. Fifty trained ponies, and 50 trained monkeys, dogs, and goats will delight the children.

Among the acts that have signed Gollmar contracts are: Gordon Sisters, aerialists and rolling globe; Tayto Family, Japanese acrobats; DeArmo and Marguete, aerialists and jugglers; Les Lardos and Paecho, sextette wire act and aerialists; Capt. Kelly and the elephants; Frank Kelso and his Liberty ponies; Boyntons Dogville; Yorks ponies, dogs, goats, monkeys and mules; The Stevens and Costello Troupe Bare Back riders; Tom Moss, upside down juggling and trapeze, and Bobline Family, contortionists and acrobats. Joe Bonhomme will be producing clown, and Oklahoma Joe Haupt will organize the Wild Riders.

The show opens with a Spectacle, "The Lion's Bride."

Several accounts including The Billboard have stated that it cost Monahan \$40,000 to frame his show and this figure should be about correct. Bulk of the property came from the American Circus Corporation and Exhibit No. 1, taken directly from Jerry Mugivan's files, lists the original equipment sold to Monahan in amount of \$26,382.35. Each item is priced and the proper account to charge it is given. The "50-50" is believed to have been one half to Sells-Floto, one half to John Robinson Circus. Other documents interpret this formula to mean that. This property for financial accounting seems to have been owned by John Robinson Circus, John Robinson Shows Co. and Sells-Floto Circus. (SFC). All property was moved from Peru to Wabash where Monahan's forces were framing the new show.

There are no documents available to indicate how Monahan was to pay



for the Peru equipment but as was usually the rule of Mugivan a down payment would be given plus notes for the balance with a lease arrangement whereby Monahan would take title upon final payment. Whatever original arrangements were made it was necessary to refinance it with the \$20,000 note of Jan. 6, 1925 printed here as Exhibit No. 2.

Although one of the advance cars on the inventory shows it to be from John Robinson Circus this is for financial accounting only. Actually the car was used on the 1922 Gollmar Bros. Circus and still had that title on the sides when it arrived in Wabash. Evidently the company owning the 1922 Gollmar show had been phased out with the John Robinson Circus account now owning all property used by that show. This can also be noted that the Gollmar cuts and paper on the list were now on John Robinson account.

The 3 former advance cars were all remodeled into tunnel type cars in which small wagons, animals, and property to be gilled could be loaded. Hammocks and portable bunks were also erected to sleep part of the personnel in these cars. Actually the type of advance cars being used at the time which were already equipped with loading doors at one end such as shown in Photo No. 1 could have their interiors stripped and converted into tunnel type cars very easily. The window arrangement of one of the cars Gollmar used in 1924-25 shown in Photo No. 3 is the same as that of the Sells-Floto Advance car in Photo No. 2 and is no doubt one and the same.

Monahan purchased two additional railway cars, both of which were to be used as sleepers, and had them shipped to Wabash. According to the late Robert (Little Bob) Stevens who was on the show in 1924 the sleeper he bunked in that year had come from the 1923 Carolina Minstrels Show. The other sleeper came from C. R. LaMont who had operated LaMont Bros. Circus on both rails and as an overland show.

E. L. (Yellow) Burnett who painted the show for Monahan in the spring of 1924 says he painted all of the cars a solid Pullman green with no lettering on the sides with exception of Monahan's initials, CJM. Later the cars were all lettered as shown in Photo No. 3 but this probably was not done until the conclusion of the 1924 season because eyewitnesses say the cars were all a solid color with no decorations or title the first year.

When the train was ready to roll it consisted of 5 cars as follows: Sleeping Car No. 21; Sleeping Car No. 22; Tunnel Car No. 23 (formerly 1922 Gollmar Bros.); Tunnel Car No.

ahan in his letter to Mugivan of July 15, 1925 printed further on describes in detail how this worked.

The quarter's shops in Wabash turned out 4 animals cages, 1 ticket wagon, and 6 baggage wagons. These according to Yellow Burnett were built by Two Gun Whitey who had signed on as trainmaster but left later and was replaced by a man named Graham. The Billboard says the cages were green and Yellow Burnett who did the painting says the baggage wagons were of a variety of colors. Each of the vehicles had low wheels which enabled it to be loaded into the tunnel cars from the end doors. Most of the equipment had to be gilled to the lot and 2 of the baggage wagons were used for this purpose. Both were sturdily built. They did not "knockdown" as did those used with baggage car shows but were loaded intact. Initially the show had 6 baggage horses to move the show on and off the lot. Later other stock was added. A light plant was built on one of the baggage wagons and rest of them loaded various big top and sideshow properties. The late Joe Metcalf who had the elephants on the 5 car show once said that the ticket wagon was so small that it had a hole cut in the floor and the guy sat on the floor with his feet on the ground while selling tickets. Metcalf recalled that Monahan once jerked some guy out of it and broke his leg leaving him a cripple ever after.

Big top poles were steel and jointed in two pieces for easier leading. Also the sideshow banner poles were pipe and in two pieces that slid inside each other with caps on top to hold pennants. There were a great number of special arrangements necessary with gilly type shows to make its operations easier.

From the list of cage type animals on Exhibit No. 1 it would seem the show had a nice group to fill out its 4 mobile cages. Those on the show say there were a number of other animals which were in stationary cages which had to be gilled.

The shows 3 elephants, Toto, Mary, and Prince had been owned by the American Circus Corporation for several years. Prince had been on Sells-Floto in 1922-23 and Toto was on Howes Great London in 1920-21. Toto was described by the late Bill Woodcock who later worked him as being a very tough little male and the hardest elephant to handle he had encountered in his career. (This written in 1962).

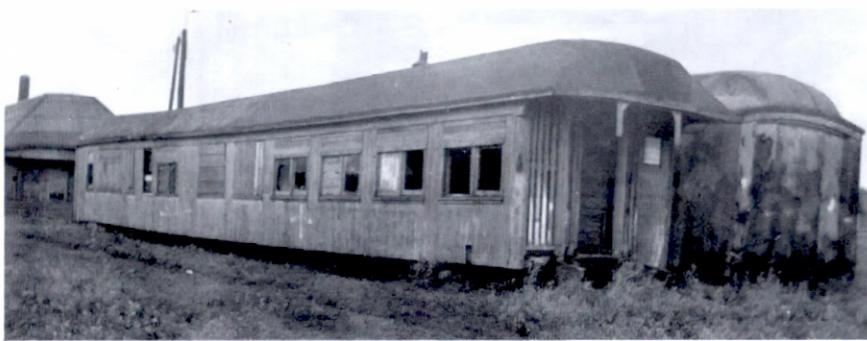
A good idea of the show's physical appearance can be gathered by a careful pursuit of the list of property in Exhibit No. 1. Note the big top was a 80 ft. round with three 40's, another top was 75 x 145 and probably



Newspaper advertisement for Gollmar Bros. Circus opening stand at Wabash, Indiana, Sat. May 3, 1924. This was a standard Gollmar cut that Mugivan had formerly used on his 1922 show. Note how the figures 500 and 700 have been mutilated to read 50 and 70 but still look like the original numbers. Frederick C. Bahler Collection.

24 (formerly Sells-Floto); and Tunnel Car No. 25 (formerly Sells-Floto). Sleeper No. 21 had one end fixed up as a pie car for dining and privileges. These cars are more fully described in Exhibit No. 2.

Unlike flat car type shows which moved in freight service the Gollmar train, as was true of other gilly and tunnel car shows, moved in passenger service in accordance with rates and conditions set forth by the various regional passenger associations. Mon-



used for the menagerie, and a 20 x 49 top used for pit show. Monahan acquired elsewhere a 60 ft. round with one 40 ft. middle to use for the main sideshow which was equipped with 8 banners.

As mentioned earlier Jerry Mugivan had a 5 year lease on the Gollmar title with 3 more years to go. He permitted Monahan to use the title for the new show. In all probability a formal sub-lease was drawn up granting Monahan the right to use the title as a protection against any legal action by the Gollmar family however there is no indication in any of the documents turned up that Monahan paid Mugivan any consideration for this right. On the property inventory there is shown a "lot of" Gollmar cuts plus considerable amount of Gollmar billing paper. I would suspect Mugivan charged nothing for use of the title being only too glad to get rid of the surplus paper on hand for which he had no use. Also as is usually the case Mugivan probably was responsible for a supply of Gollmar paper still on shelves of Donaldson Lithographic Co. which of course Monahan would use after his initial supply of paper was exhausted.

The first real news in The Billboard concerning the new show appeared in the April 19, 1924 issue in the following article:

**C. J. MONAHAN TO USE GOLLMAR BROS. TITLE. SHOW WILL HAVE 2 RINGS AND ARENA. PROGRAM WILL INCLUDE ANIMALS AND CIRCUS ACTS."**

"The show which Chester J. Monahan is assembling at Wabash, Indiana will bear the title of Gollmar Bros. Trained Wild Animal Circus. It will move as a special train, will have 2 rings and steel arena, and feature performing camels, elephants, lions, dogs, ponies, monkeys, and a "baby zoo." Acrobatic, juggling, aerial, and other artistes will be carried. A general color scheme of green is being carried out on all cars and cages under the supervision of E. L. (Yellow) Burnett. The show is to open at Wabash, Ind. May 3rd and will be one of the neatest and best of its kind on the road says H. D. Carney, contracting agent. The organization will have its winter quarters and permanent office in Wabash. A number of animals have been purchased from the Sells-Floto and John Robinson circuses and soon will

**Photo No. 4 — Two cars used by the 1924-25 Gollmar Bros. Circus parked just south of the Peru Quarters rail yards. Photo was taken in June 1941 but the title "Gollmar Bros. Champion Show of the World" could still be observed through the cracked and faded paint. Car in foreground appears to have been used as a sleeper and car in back as a tunnel car. Photo by Chalmer Condon.**

be shipped from Peru, Ind. The executive staff includes: Chester J. Monahan, manager; Henry W. Link, general agent. Harry D. Carney, contracting agent; S. B. Warren, advertising car mgnr., Fred Bickell, advertising repres., Jasper Fulton, press agent and asst. treas. with the show. Ray Dick, sideshow mgnr.: W. O. Kelly, curio and Jungeland manager; Frank B. Meister, bandmaster of the big show: Walter Jackson, sideshow bandmaster; Frank Kelso and W. B. York, equestrian director; Joe Bonhomme, producing clown, Oklahoma Joe Haupt, director of the wild west."

A later note in the April 26, 1924 Billboard said that — "Gollmar Bros. Circus will have DeArno and Marguerite, comedy jugglers and sensational upside down performers. Equestrian director W. B. York will have his troupe of educated ponies, dogs, goats, and monkeys on the shows. Boynton's Dogville Act will be on the show. Ray Dick will have a colored band in the sideshow and a wrestling bear in his Curioland."

Although several accounts mention the show had a steel arena there seems to be no evidence as to just what type of act was presented. In all probability there was nothing other than the fighting lion act usually found in sideshows. Capt. Dutch Ricardo had such an act in the steel arena under the Gollmar big top in 1925 and either he or someone else no doubt worked the lion in 1924. There were not enough animals on the show to present a regular trained cat or multi animal act. There were several animals on the show that were used in the sideshow and pit shows.

The show had no advance car in 1924, the advance moving by "box brigade." That is the manager and the billers traveled in regular passenger trains with their "box" containing brushes, paste, etc. as baggage. Paper was delivered by express to each town to be billed. At each stand a truck or auto was rented from

a livery for use as the advance billed the town and surrounding territory. After the job was completed the advance crew then proceeded by regular passenger train to the next stand. This practice continued as long as the show was on the road.

There is no evidence that the Gollmar show paraded in 1924. It was really not fully equipped to do so, however there is a possibility a few parades were made using lead stock, cages, and the band either walking, a la minstrel and dramatic shows, or riding on the gilly wagons. While still a tunnel car show in 1925 the show is known to have made a few parades but these were the exception rather than the rule. There was always mixed feelings on the parade by the management of a gilly or tunnel car show. Some shows did parade as did E. H. Jones 3 car Cole & Rogers Circus in years 1928-30. However Floyd and Howard King never had a parade with their gilly and tunnel car shows in years 1919-24. Some managers, like Jones, were of opinion any kind of parade or downtown showing helped business. Others felt that since a gilly or tunnel car show couldn't put on much of a parade it was best not to attempt to do so as the natives would see the skimpy parade and feel the show's performance would be likewise. This was especially true when a small show was carrying a well known larger show title as was Gollmar Bros.

The 1924 season was now at hand and Monahan's 5 car Gollmar Bros. was ready for it. Railroad shows, flat car type, going out in 1924 included Ringling-Barnum, Sells-Floto, Hagenbeck-Wallace, John Robinson, Al G. Barnes, Sparks, Walter L. Main, Golden Bros., Gentry-Patterson, Robbins Bros., and Christy Bros. Also out were the King brothers 5 car (tunnel) Harris Bros., and E. H. Jones two girly shows, Cole Bros. and Cooper Bros. In addition to the railers there were a number of mud shows, most of them now traveling on a combination of wagons and motor trucks.

The new Gollmar Bros. Circus opened May 3, 1924 in its quarters town of Wabash, Ind. There is not too much information on the early season route but there is indication the show went as far east as Pittsburgh but is believed to have spent most of the first weeks in Indiana, Ohio, and generally in that area.

Monahan's show soon acquired the reputation of being a red hot graft outfit as all of the popular forms of graft of the day were carried. Until only a few years ago this type of graft had been associated with many circuses including those operated by Mugivan. However Mugivan had eliminated graft on all of his shows fol-

lowing the 1922 season. In the early 20's there had begun a strong movement in the circus and carnival industry to clean itself up. By 1924 virtually all of the larger railroad shows with a few notable exceptions had eliminated the graft. Mugivan had become convinced his shows could coin the dough without graft and his decision to eliminate it in 1923 was greatly aided by the senseless murder of Benny Miles the legal adjuster on the lot of the 1922 Gollmar Bros. show by a deputy sheriff in Arkansas over a graft matter. Monahan, however, who had for a long time been a connection man for Mugivan, put in all the forms of graft with his Gollmar show.

Graft consisted of gambling in both the sideshow and the privilege car. An interesting document we located shows the following items written on a letterhead and marked Gollmar Bros. Shows—Roulette Wheel with layout; Two 5c slot machines, two folding chairs, check rack without checks, stud table. This equipment was portable and was moved back and forth between privilege car on the train and the sideshow. Also operating in the sideshow was the shell game and 3 card monte "to take the rubes and suckers." The sideshow also had cooch dancers with a blowoff. (Blowoff was a second show, a "real" one to be given behind the curtain for another quarter). The cooch dances were considered a part of the graft because in small towns in those days they had to be "fixed" with local authorities the same as the gambling devices. The strongest part of the graft however was in the connection racket which consisted of reserve seat ticket sellers operating in the connection between menagerie and big top taking short working in either silver or soft money. Whereas relatively few people came into contact with the sideshow, every man, woman, and child was confronted with the connection. The usual rush and confusion to get into the big top eliminated a lot of potential squawks but still the connection was always a continuous source of heat.

Yellow Burnett comments on the show's graft in 1924 by stating, "There was plenty of graft around it and we had plenty of clems, a really big one in Miamisburg, Ohio, in fact they were a common occurrence." All others we contacted who were familiar with the show termed it a "red hot graft outfit."

At times there were a few short notices in the Billboard about the show, including a few of its dates, but usually as was customary with the smaller shows, very little appeared. The show remained mainly in the mid-west and is known to have

gone into Wisconsin, into the old Gollmar territory. It is believed the show played rather extensively in Wisconsin as it did in 1925, which is mentioned later in greater detail.

The Aug. 23, 1924 Billboard reported that H. L. Bush closed with Gollmar Bros. at Superior, Neb. Aug. 13. He mentioned having a very good season and expressed regret in leaving a congenial crowd of performers. The following route was listed, Aug. 21, Hoxie, Kan.; Aug. 22, Colby, Kan.; Aug. 23, Oakley, Kan.

An advertisement in the Sept. 13, 1924 issue read, "Gollmar Bros. wants bill posters for long season." Route was given as Sept. 11, Heber Springs, Ark.; Sept. 12, Searcy, Ark.

The Oct. 14, 1924 Billboard said, "Henry W. Link, general agent with Gollmar Bros. writes from Brinkley, Ark., — 'I have never seen such an early fall here and things don't look any too good for shows. Cotton will not be as good as some figured. The frost will surely get some of it.'

The following was in the Nov. 1, 1924 Billboard, "James Shropshire, who had charge of Gentry-Patterson sideshow is now manager of the kid show with Gollmar Bros. having taken charge at Hughes, Ark., Oct. 6. He brought several people with him including, Fred Arm, ticket seller; Abdella Ben Deb, bagpiper; Polly and Polly, Hawaiian musicians."

An interesting account of the show's recent route and business appeared in the Nov. 15, 1924 Billboard which stated, "Clarence Auskings is still doing local contracting ahead of Gollmar Bros. Circus. Henry W. Link is general agent and S. B. Warren, mgr. of the No. 1 car. Business for the show has been good in Texas, and

**Photo No. 5 — The small baggage wagon in foreground was used by Gollmar Bros. in 1924-25 and loaded in the tunnel cars. This photo taken at Peru Quarters rail yards in 1933. Photo by Ralph Miller.**



no rain has been encountered for the past 5 weeks."

Although most shows were in the barn before December Gollmar was still going strong and the following route was mentioned in the Dec. 20, 1924 Billboard, Dec. 17, Luling, Texas; Dec. 18, Lutcher, Texas.

The Jan. 3, 1925 issue told of the closing of Gollmar's long initial season as follows, "Gollmar Bros. Ends Season at Clinton, La. In Quarters at Mobile, Ala.—Gollmar Bros. closed a very successful season at Clinton, La. Dec. 20 and went into winter quarters at Monroe Park, Mobile, Ala. reports Auskings, contracting agent. The show traveled 16,568 miles, was in 14 states, played Chicago and Pittsburgh suburbs. Show will open 1925 tour early in March."

Just how successful businesswise the show was in 1924 is not known for sure. Some sources indicate the tour was a failure, however it is evident the show must have done fairly well to have made such a long tour. There is no doubt that Monahan had not been able to meet his financial obligations to Mugivan and it was necessary to refinance. In a note dated Jan. 6, 1925 shown here as Exhibit No. 2 Monahan agreed to pay \$20,000 in 20 payments of \$1,000.00 each as specified. The notes were to be made payable to the Wabash Valley Trust Company and were signed by Chester and Myrtle Monahan. These are on file in the Ringling Circus Museum. Last note was to be paid on Aug. 15, 1925. Mugivan was given a full mortgage on all equipment of the show including the two rail cars Monahan had purchased elsewhere. This remarkable document which lists all of the equipment gives a complete picture of the tunnel car show at this stage. As it can be noted many of the original charges, even the board for elephants and camels are listed indicating the new note was just not a loan for \$20,000 but was a refinancing of the original purchase.



Some monies were paid to Monahan however.

Documents on file at the Ringling Museum indicate that in addition to the insurance policy on the equipment described in the note Mugivan also had a life insurance policy on Monahan with benefits payable to him (Mugivan). Two insurance policies in amount of \$15,000 are on file on the 5 railroad cars, minus contents, with benefits, if any, payable to Mugivan. One is dated May 3, 1924, the other a year later, May 3, 1925. Jerry was a shrewd operator and was taking no chances on losing on his investment.

The following letter was sent by Monahan to Sam Dill when he returned the notes.

Mobile, Ala.  
Jan. 11, 1925

Mr. Sam Dill  
West Baden, Ind.  
Dear Sir and Friend —

I am enclosing you twenty notes as requested by Mr. Mugivan and Mr. Harter. (Author's note — Don Harter of the Wabash Valley Trust Co.).

I arrived back home all O.K. and found everything in good shape. Am starting in the morning to get everything all in shape for an early opening going over into Fla. early. Will try and get a little Spring money over there.

Am hoping to see the country in better shape for the coming season. I am going to try and cut the nut of the show down this season as I think the show was too expensive last year. If I had a small animal act of some kind, three or four lions, or three or four bears it would be a great asset to the show. Now Sam if you are going to have any animals over there you are going to dispose of I would like very much to have them.

Trusting this finds you and Mrs. Dill in the best of health with lots of good wishes from Mrs. Monahan and myself.

Yours sincerely,  
C. J. Monahan  
Mobile, Ala., Box 1056

Mugivan penciled at bottom of this letter, "Harter, did you advise Dill how much to give Monahan," indicating some cash was to be paid.

A little news concerning the show's winter activities at Monroe Park in Mobile filtered thru the Billboard pages. One note in the Feb. 21, 1925 issue said that Mr. and Mrs. Al H.

**Letterhead used by the show in 1924 had script type done in purple.**

Cooper had signed contracts to go with the show with Al to manage the sideshow and Mrs. Cooper to perform on rings, trapeze, and swinging perch.

As unlikely as it would seem due to the financial difficulties, heavy mortgage with a one grand payment due on April 4 and a grand a week from then on until paid, there is evidence the show did considerable rebuilding, repainting, and even construction of new wagons prior to opening of the 1925 season. The March 21, 1925 Billboard announced that Gollmar would open the season March 26 in Mobile and said that wagons and cages had been rebuilt, repainted, and new ones added. Several people on the show, including Billy Dick, who handled the big snake and danced in the sideshow have indicated new wagons were added and the late Col. Woodcock was of this opinion. One list of wagons on the show in 1925 showed there were 9 baggage wagons including a big top and menagerie wagon; cookhouse wagon; prop wagon; light plant wagon; stringer wagon; reserve seat wagon; plank and jack wagon; candy and ticket wagon; and cookhouse and concession wagon. One list also shows an air calliope but this is doubtful since Monahan's letter of August 3 printed later expressing his strong desire to obtain an air calliope implies he did not have one. Also observers have said the show in early 1925 had 8 small cages, 5½ ft. long, which loaded side by side in the tunnel cars. It is entirely probable the show did add more cages so as to put all of its animals on rolling vehicles. Unfortunately the files contain no documents nor have any photos turned up to prove if additional cages and wagons were added for 1925. Even with additional wagons there would still be considerable properties to be gilled and one or more of the above listed wagons would have to be so constructed to serve in this capacity.

These tunnel car shows were very tightly loaded and those on the show say that much equipment was carried in the sleeper possum bellies including extra candy supplies, even billing paper and heralds which could be shipped ahead as needed. The additional wagons alledged to have been built in Mobile are said to have been constructed by Ted Caviness.

Col. Bill Woodcock once wrote describing the small Gollmar wagons as follows, "I noted two low wagons in Peru quarters in 1931. We used one for a manure wagon to clean out the bull barn. Was told that they were with the Gollmar 5 car show. These had clown and animal heads painted on the sides but no title. I think the basic color was yellow which would have been the 1925 paint job." (See Photo No. 5).

The show in 1925 had practically the same layout as the year before. The sideshow had ten 10 x 16 banners and an entrance doorway lettered, "Gollmar Bros. Family Theater Entrance." Show had two light plants, one Universal for the big top, another for front and midway. A plant located on one of the rail cars provided illumination for them and the loading runs.

The roster of personnel for 1925 was as follows: C. J. Monahan, mgr.; J. H. Brown, secy., treas. and auditor; Henry W. Link, general agent and railroad contractor; H. B. Harris, local contractor; Ben Adams, special agent; Arthur Bender, contr. press agent; A. R. Woods, supt. privileges; Prof. Bindl, musical director; Robert Clark, supt. res. seats; H. D. Wilson, supt. canvas; H. J. Johnson, trainmaster; Carl Houpe, boss hostler; Joggy Rogers, supt. commissary dept.; A. B. Garrett, supt. lights; Will Robinson, supt. props; Earl Carnellia, supt. ring stock and lead stock; Bill Howe, supt. working crew; C. K. Cristie, 24 hr. agent; Joe Metcalf, supt. elephants; Carl Houseman, supt. animals; Jim Roberts, blacksmith; S. B. Warren, mgr. adv. car no. 1; Harry Wilson, checkerup; W. C. Chaplin, legal adj.; L. Coper, announcer.

No detailed account of the Gollmar 1925 performance during early season has turned up but it was probably on par with that of the previous season despite Monahan's desire to cut down on the nut. One of the main attractions was the fighting lion act presented in the center ring steel arena by Capt. Dutch Ricardo.

Gollmar opened it's 1925 season with a two day stand in Mobile, March 26-27, under auspices of the American Legion. A night parade was staged on March 26. The Billboard said the show planned to play thru Alabama, Tenn., Ky., and West Virginia en-

route to Pennsylvania and eastern territory.

The show ran into early difficulties with state and local authorities according to the following article in the April 18, 1925 Billboard —

"GOLLMAR SHOW HAS TROUBLE OVER LICENSE IN MISSISSIPPI"

"Aberdeen, Miss., April 11 — Gollmar Bros. which gave 2 performances here yesterday, struck a snag, but the matter was adjusted and the show proceeded early this morning to Tupelo for today's stand.

"From an authoritative source it was learned that the circus had been operating in this state under the form of license issued to tent dramatic shows. A state revenue agent who came to Aberdeen to attend Federal Court caught the show operating under this kind of license and immediately took steps to collect the same fee that is charged the largest circus. A compromise was reached last night for the amount of \$2,000.00.

"Two side shows are carried by Gollmar Bros. One, according to the same authority as mentioned above, yesterday afternoon, put on a cooch dance by 3 women with an admission of 15c, followed by a blowoff for 25c extra. City Officials stopped the dance at the night performance."

Early season opposition was encountered with the Mighty Haag Shows at Jasper, Ala. with Gollmar playing April 14 and Haag scheduled for April 18. Haag claimed capacity both afternoon and night.

Jesse Coleman, pit show operator with Robbins Bros. visited Gollmar at an early season stand and reported to the Billboard that Chester Monahan had a nice show. He said that D. C. (Slim) Hawn was now acting as asst. manager and John Lancaster was boss of the dressing room.

The May 23, 1925 Billboard stated that Gollmar had played through portions of Ala., Miss., Tenn., Ky., and West Virginia. Business was said to have been good considering the weather situation and banner spots so far had been Aberdeen, Miss., Jasper, Ala. and Kingsport, Tenn. It was reported the show had some new canvas and banners and that wardrobe was kept spick and span by Mrs. Bendl, wardrobe mistress. Article said the show had been parading but it is not believed to have been a regular occurrence.

After playing West Virginia and eastern Pennsylvania the show headed back thru Ohio and Indiana and up into Wisconsin, the home state of the old Gollmar show. Monahan who had acquired the valuable services of D. C. Hawn put him ahead to route the show and according to Monahan in his letter of June 22 things begin to pick up. Business was better and the show was now making regular payments on the note to Mugivan. It seemed at last Monahan was going to be able to make a success out of his show and it wasn't long before he was thinking of enlarging to a 10 car,

flat car type show. Fortunately we have the correspondence between Monahan and Mugivan during the next important weeks of the show's history. Much of it is reproduced here as these letters tell so vividly about the operation of the show, the territory played, business gathered, and the plans for enlarging the show. The correspondence begins as follows.

Eagle River, Wis.  
June 22, 1925

Mr. Jerry Mugivan  
Peru, Ind.  
Dear Sir:

I am enclosing your draft for \$1000.00. Will send same direct to bank. Business much better last two weeks and looks good here at Eagle River, Wis. Show in last two weeks has made \$2200.00. I had to send Donaldson \$500.00 and war tax. I had to take out state license for Wisconsin and also workingmen's compensation insurance which cost me \$750.00 for 9 days insurance. My route looks very good on up ahead and quite sure I am going to get some money and I will send it in just as fast as I can. I have been real busy last week. Got in a little mining town called Vulcan, Mich. Boss canvassman got full and walked away so I have been quite busy with the top. Outside of that everything going along all O.K. Ever since Hawn has been up ahead the show has done much better. He is pretty well versed with class of town show fits in. He reports Minnesota and North Dakota in good shape and thinks we are going to do well up here. Lets hope so as I sure need some business as I would like to get some money in to you but I will just as fast as I can.

Tetu arrived here yesterday A.M. which was Sunday. She looks well and we are glad to have her and will take good care of her. Briggs getting along fine also very willing fellar and a great asset to the show and seems to like it all O.K. We are having the finest kind of weather the past week which helps a lot. Trusting this finds you, also Mrs. Mugivan, enjoying best of health and your business the best. Mrs. Monahan joins with best wishes.

Very truly, your friend,  
C. J. Monahan

Photo No. 6—Gollmar Bros. 1924 big show band on lot. Gentleman standing in front of the bass drum is the late Robert "Little Bob" Stevens. Robert Stevens Collection.



June 25, 1925

Mr. Chester J. Monahan  
Gollmar Brothers Circus  
Iron River, Wisc.

Dear Chester:

Have your letter and glad to know that business is some improved and trust that it continues. With best wishes from Mrs. Mugivan and myself to you and Mrs. Monahan, I am.

Very truly,  
Jerry Mugivan

Sometime before Monahan wrote again to Mugivan on June 27 something must have been mentioned concerning enlarging to a 10 car show. Unfortunately there is nothing in the files prior to the June 27 letter about the 10 car show so we are unable to learn just who first mentioned it. Probably Monahan mentioned it and Mugivan then said it could become a reality. In any event the 10 car show was now in the talking stage.

Mellon, Wis.  
June 27, 1925

Mr. Jerry Mugivan  
Peru, Ind.

Dear Friend Mr. Mugivan,

I received your letter you wrote to me at Florence, it was forwarded to me to Rhylander, Wis. in regard to ten car show. I appreciate your kindness in every way and if I can pick up a little money up thru here I would be glad to add on the other four or five cars going South. The show had a fairly good week this past week with a lot of cold wet weather. With everything the show quit a little better than fourteen hundred dollar winner. I am going up in Minn. and come back in Wis. and get the resort spots and I think the show will make a little money in them.

I would have answered your letter a little sooner only I have been so busy, as we had rain every night last week and I had to leave Juggy Rodgers in the hospital at Rhylander as he was taken real sick. Had a letter from him today and he is getting along real well so he writes.

Tetu arrived at Eagle River last Sunday and is getting along fine and seems to like the show real well.

I will send the Wabash Valley Trust Co. eight hundred dollars tomorrow morning for you. Hope I can send you more next Monday.

Trusting this finds you in the best of health, also Mrs. Mugivan, with kindest

personal regards from Mrs. Monahan and myself to you and Mrs. Mugivan, I am,  
Yours very truly,  
C. J. Monahan

Route:

June 29 — Mellon, Wis.  
June 30 — Iron River, Wis.  
July 1 — Allouez, Wis.  
July 2 — Cloquet, Minn.  
July 3 — Hill City, Minn.  
July 4 — Coleraine, Minn.  
July 5-6 — Cass Lake, Minn.  
July 7 — Black Duck, Minn.  
July 8 — Big Falls, Minn.  
July 9 — Kellener, Minn.  
July 10 — Bagley, Minn.  
July 11 — Fosston, Minn.

Peru, Indiana  
July 6, 1925

Mr. Chester J. Monahan  
Gollmar Brothers Circus  
Fosston, Minn.

Dear Chester,

Glad to have your letter from Mellon and to know that Gollmar Brothers is getting some money.

Note what you say about Rodgers and Tetu and sincerely trust that business continues good with you.

With kindest regards to Mrs. Monahan and yourself from Mrs. Mugivan and myself, I am.

Very truly,  
Jerry Mugivan

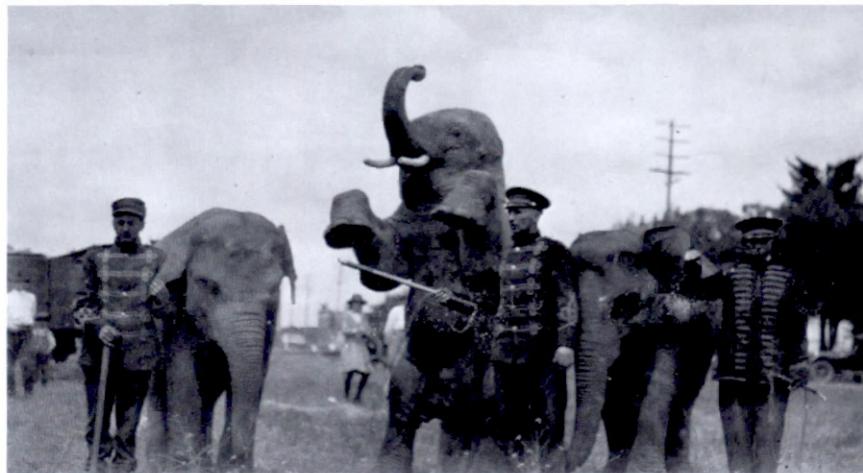
As can be noted from the show's route of the past few weeks it was now thoroughly covering the old Gollmar Bros. territory. Although many of the very small towns had not been played by the large Gollmar rail show during its last few years on the road the natives still remembered the show and it must be recalled that they would travel for miles, sometimes by special railroad excursion, to the larger cities where Gollmar would be playing. They were now somewhat confounded when they saw a much smaller Gollmar show traveling on only 5 cars and were at a loss to understand it. Yellow Burnett writes that when the Monahan show was playing in familiar Wisconsin territory the people who came down to the railroad yards to see it come in would not believe it was the Gollmar Bros. show. Monahan would have an awful time trying to straighten them out and he used to tell them that we had a fire or train wreck and that most of the show was getting built again.

The Gollmar family was extremely upset over the Monahan show. Not only was their well respected title being used on a show far inferior to the one they had operated but also the heavy graft and heat created by the show especially in towns where the populace knew them personally and by reputation caused them no end of grief. Judge Robert Gollmar of Baraboo, son of Fred Gollmar, wrote me that he recalls the apprehension over use of the title by Monahan and that they had their attorney check

into the matter but he reported there was nothing in the lease to prevent Mugivan's sub lease of the title to Monahan and there was nothin the family could do about it.

The continued good business Monahan was getting got him to seriously considering having Mugivan frame a flat car show for him and by late July 1925 definite plans were being made. The correspondence continues.

parade and would be a small flash as that is all show needs, a good flash on street and quite sure it would bring in lots better revenue. This country, Minn. North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Western Canada, are going to get the best grain and hay crop they have had in years. Next season out here there will be plenty of money. Sparks is up in this country and he bills his show very heavily and has been covering my paper. I have 4 billposters and brigade men on the advance and no spare help to go and protect it.



Elephant in center is Toto, a tough little male tusker, which was one of the herd of 3 on the Gollmar Bros. Circus in 1924-25. This photo was taken in 1921 on the Howes Great London Shows and Van Amburg's Trained Wild Animals. Ed H. "Barnum" Davis is the handler. Pfening (Woodcock) Collection.

Henning, Minn.  
July 15, 1925

Mr. Jerry Mugivan  
Peru, Ind.

Dear Sir:

I am sending the Wabash Valley Trust \$1000.00 this morning. Show has been getting better business up here outside of the smaller towns. I went up to places called Black Duck, Kellener, and Big Falls, Minn. up north from Cass Lake, the population of these towns about 600. They were all right good spots some years back but the lumber all cut now, nothing to support the towns and no country population to draw into town. But that is agents fault. Had no business up in them but they make mistakes. The Central and Western Passenger Association has a new tariff out June 15th which has raised the rates out in this country. I am on the Soo Line now. To move show I buy 125 tickets with a minimum of \$120.00 plus 18.75 surcharge on sleepers, 10.80 parking charge, then add on one dollar for each mile show jumps, say thirty miles, \$30.00, it amounts to a whole lot in weeks time. Cost too much money. Now 10 car rate out here from Cincinnati west or north to the coast, \$240.00 for 51 miles jump and allow twenty per cent of that for script mileage for the advance with their box brigade. I buy tickets and pay excess for paper and trunks as no script allowed through passenger department, so you see I could move 10 cars cheaper than this show. This show is odd size affair, with 10 cars could frame a real nice

I am going back up in Wisconsin and Northern Michigan for a few good towns up around Marquette. Mining towns that are working. Copper country dead. Then come back down into Wisconsin and cross a few Illinois towns and down into North Carolina as lots of good small towns in Virginia and N. C. I trust I will be able to send you some more money latter part of week or first of next week. I am enclosing you the rates I have been paying to move up here. Tetu is getting along just fine and seems to like it here all O.K., as it is like home for her. Trusting this finds you well, also Mrs. Mugivan. With lots of good wishes from Mrs. Monahan, Tetu, and myself.

Your friend,  
C. J. Monahan

As indicated by the above letter it would seem that the new railroad tariffs which actually charged 5 car show moving in passenger service more than 10 cars in freight was the final element that convinced Monahan to go for the flat car show. Also note in this letter the opposition from Sparks Circus. Although this is the only mention of opposition from another show in Monahan's letters it can be assumed that this was a fairly common thing in 1925 with the large number of shows on the road. Flat car type rail shows out in 1925 were Ringling-Barnum, Sells-Floto, Hagenbeck-Wallace, John Robinson, Al G. Barnes, Sparks, Christy Bros., Lee Bros., Walter L. Main, and Gentry-Patterson. Floyd and Howard had now enlarged to a flat car show using the Walter L. Main title but E. H. Jones still had his gilly show, Cooper Bros. on the road. As usual a goodly number of mud shows were on tour. Also to give real competition especially to the larger circuses was the reappearance of the Miller Bros. 191 Ranch Wild West Show, a major flat car show of the finest quality.

Peru, July 17, 1925

Mr. Chester Monahan  
Gollmar Bros. Circus  
Frederic, Wisc.

Dear Chester:

Glad to have your letter and if you want to make a ten car show out of it have the property here with exception of the horses for baggage.

With best wishes to you and Mrs. Monahan from Mrs. Mugivan and myself, I am,

Very truly,  
Jerry Mugivan

Rice Lake, Wis. July 26, 1925

Mr. Jerry Mugivan  
Peru, Ind.

Dear Sir —

Your letter dated July 17 received at Frederic and contents fully noted in regard to property for ten car show. I think I could handle ten cars with very little more net per week by leaving the performance about the same as it is, by adding about three flats, one stock car, and one sleeper.

I could pick up a few horses as I went along. What have you in Peru in cage and tableau wagons, also have you a ticket wagon and calliope? This additional property would give me a much better flash and would flash the show up better on the lot. I am figuring on coming down through Chicago, probably showing at Desplaines and Chicago Heights, taking the C. and E. I. south and delivering to the L & N at Mount Vernon, Ill., taking a few coal towns in Western Kentucky, and across Kentucky to Norton, Va. and on over into North Carolina. I want to be there not later than October 1st. I am going up in Northern Michigan for a week now, then come on back in Wisconsin for about ten days.

You can let me know in the meantime what property you have that I can use with a ten car show. I have eight head of baggage horses now and four good size ponies that make a good four horse team. There is a lot of good heavy horses in this country that can be bought for seventy five to one hundred dollars per head, but I have no room to carry them. Business the past week has been fairly good, the show grossed on the week \$5427.05. All of the other privileges did not gross quite seven hundred on the week as we were in one county three days and the stores never worked at all in that county.

I am mailing the Wabash Trust Co. a draft for two thousand dollars Monday A.M.

Tetu is well and seems to like the show and is getting along all O.K.

Trusting your shows are enjoying a big business also that you and Mrs. Mugivan are enjoying the best of health. With kindest personal wishes, I am,

Yours very truly,  
C. J. Monahan

Route:

July 27 — Rice Lake, Wis.  
July 28 — Spooner, Wis.  
July 29 — Hayward, Wis.  
July 30 — Bibon, Wis.  
July 31 — Saxon, Wis.  
Aug. 1 — Ewen, Mich.  
Aug. 2-3 — Trout Creek, Mich.  
Aug. 4 — Baraga, Mich.  
Aug. 5 — Lake Linden, Mich.  
Aug. 6 — Houghton, Mich.  
Aug. 7 — Mass, Mich.  
Aug. 8 — Ontonagon, Mich.

Peru, Indiana  
July 28, 1925

Mr. Chester J. Monahan  
Gollmar Brothers Circus  
Ewen, Mich.

Dear Chester,

Have your letter of the 26th. There are five flats here. You can take one of your cars for an advance car, use two for stock, two for sleepers or I can fix you up an advance car here, also wagons and all.

You can send Hawn here with a list of what you want. The property is here. You could then route your show this way and pick it up. Have all kinds of animals also. Send list of what you have and what you want. Must be done at once.

With best regards and wishes, I am.

Very truly,  
Jerry Mugivan

WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM  
Trout Creek, Mich. Aug. 3, 1925  
Jerry Mugivan  
Peru, Ind.

You fix advance car up. Peru. Can use four flats. Five tableau wagons, four cages, ten sets harness. Hawn should arrive Peru Wednesday. Letter follows.

C. J. Monahan

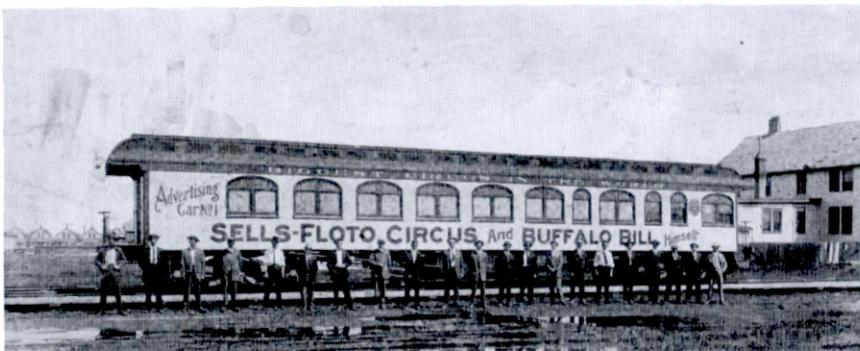
would be a great asset to the show.

If you have one fifty foot round top with two thirties or three twenties I could use it very nicely for a menagerie.

Now in regard to cars, I can use four flats or three flats and one stock. I think that would be the best for you to fix up an advance car at Peru as you have the boilers and everything there, and then I can sail along with this as it is here and lose no time in making the change.

I have the route laid down to Chicago Heights for Wednesday, Sept. 2. Hawn is up on the advance and will be able to get away Tuesday or Wednesday, Aug. 4 or 5, and I will send him right on to Peru.

I had a bad accident at Spooner, Wis. We were showing on a bad sandy lot close to the water edge and the reserve seat section went down, seven lengths of them. I think it was a stringer turned and gave way as they all went to the side shifting to the left. Five women had minor scratches and bruises on their shins, one woman a broken leg. The accident cost me two hundred and forty dollars. I have always been very careful in regard to the seats as I always walk them over before doors open. I think it was the soft sandy



Advertising Car No. 1 of Sells-Floto Circus and Buffalo Bill Himself season 1914 or 1915. This was one of the three advertising cars sold to Chester Monahan by the American Circus Corporation in the early Spring of 1924 for the new Gollmar Bros. Circus. Pfening (Woodcock) Collection.

Trout Creek, Mich.  
August 3, 1925

Mr. Jerry Mugivan  
Peru, Ind.

Dear Sir —

Your letter dated July 28 received and contents noted. Now I have animals, 3 elephants, 1 camel, 3 kangaroos, 3 cub bears which I bought last week for one hundred dollars, 1 lion, 1 puma. Have 10 head of draft horses, bought 2 last week with harness for two hundred dollars. Very nice team and weight about 24 hundred.

The property I need with this show is parade props such as tableau wagons and cages, as tableaus can be used for trunks, seats, props, and etc. I need a ticket wagon as it will dress the front of the show up and help the general appearance of the lot.

You state you have plenty of animals. I would like to have a couple of nice groups that work if you have anything like that. I would also like to have ten or twelve sets of double harness, also a calliope of some kind as I think a calliope

ground that caused the stringer to turn.

Business has been bad the past four days as we have been in this old cut over lumber country and there is no work or money in this part of Wisconsin. Had to come this way to get thru to Michigan. I look for business to pick up tomorrow at Baraga, Mich. and it looks pretty good from there on.

I will send you some money just as soon as I can. Trusting this finds you and Mrs. Mugivan in the best of health. With kindest personal wishes from Mrs. Monahan and myself, I am,

Yours very truly,  
C. J. Monahan

Peru, Indiana  
August 6, 1925

Mr. Chester Monahan  
Gollmar Bros. Circus  
Oconto, Wisc.

Dear Chester,

Have your letter of the third and when Hawn arrives will go over the proposition with him, but in my opinion you should make a 15 car show, wild west, out of it. We have the property here to do it with, if you could get the show together.

If not, we can fix up the ten car show. With best wishes, I am,

Very truly,  
Jerry Mugivan

(To Be Continued In Next Issue)

## EXHIBIT NO. 1

### LIST OF PROPERTY — to — CHESTER J. MONAHAN

1 — Sells Floto Advance Car		\$2000.00	12 — Single Trees	50-50	6.00
1 — Sells Floto Advance Car		1500.00	5 — Double Trees	50-50	5.00
1 — John Robinson's Circus Advance Car		3000.00	1 — Wheelbarrow	50-50	5.00
1 — Elephant (Mary)	JRC	3000.00	1000 — Lbs. iron	50-50	10.00
1 — Elephant (Toto)	JRC	2500.00	12 — Chairs	SFC	12.00
1 — Elephant (Prince)	JRC	2500.00	20 — Capes and Turbans	SFC	200.00
1 — Leopard	SFC	50.00	3 — Property Coats	SFC	6.00
1 — Puma	50-50	50.00	4 — Pony Boys Coats and Caps	SFC	12.00
3 — Kangaroos	SFC	600.00	3 — Property Caps	SFC	1.50
1 — Lion	SFC	350.00	1 — Canvas Hamper	SFC	20.00
2 — Camels	JRS Co.	2000.00	60 — Days board, 3 elephants	50-50	180.00
6 — John Robinson Baggage Horses		600.00	60 — Days board, 2 camels	50-50	36.00
6 — Sells Floto Ponies		750.00	30 — Days board, 6 horses	50-50	108.00
1 — Hurdle Mule (Peanuts)	JRS Co.	75.00	1 — Office Safe, Combination	SFC	10.00
6 — Sets Baggage Harness	JRS Co.	300.00	100 — Blue Seat Planks		\$26,282.35
6 — Sells Floto Pony Bridles		6.00			100.00
1 — John Robinson Tent — 75 x 145		200.00			\$26,382.35
1 — John Robinson Tent — 80 x 3/40s		1800.00			
1 — Pit Show Tent — 20 x 49	JRC	75.00			
2 — Canvas Ring Curbs	JRS Co.	40.00			
6 — Seat Curtains	Don't know	60.00			
1 — John Robinson Sideshow Marquee		25.00			
1 — Sideshow Curtain		50-50			
10 — Banner Poles for Sideshow	JRS Co.	125.00			
2 — Poles for Pit Show		0-50			
4 — Bale Rings		50-50			
4 — Main Falls		50-50			
3 — Sideshow Ticket Boxes		15.00			
1 — Connection Stand	JRC	5.00			
1 — Front Door Ticket Box		50-50			
1 — Stake Puller		50-50			
4 — Steel Center Poles	JRS Co.	100.00			
5 — Sideshow Stage Ladders		50-50			
7 — Front Door Posts		10.00			
4 — Mud Blocks		50-50			
175 — Stakes		2.00			
1 — Sidewall Ladder		50-50			
6 — Pieces of Seat Net		8.75			
4 — Pole Jacks		50-50			
1 — Sideshow Stage Curtain		50-50			
4 — Sideshow State Curtains		50-50			
1 — Stage Cover		10.00			
1 — Pit Show Curtain — 32 ft. long	JRS Co.	2.50			
12 — Cable Guys for the 80 ft. top	JRC	10.00			
4 — Flags		50-50			
64 — Reserved Seat Plank at \$5 each		50-50			
80 — Blue Plank		320.00			
48 — Blue Stringers		50-50			
18 — Reserve Seat Stringers	SFC	80.00			
1 — Lot of rope	SFC	480.00			
56 — Foot Rests		270.00			
160 — Blue Plank		12.00			
68 — Reserve Seat Plank		50-50			
1 — Rope Elephant Harness		56.00			
1 — Lot Gollmar Cuts		50-50			
410 — Sheet Streamers	JRC	160.00			
1350 — Sheet Titles	JRC	340.00			
50 — Sheet Tiger Titles	JRC	5.00			
80 — 2-sheet streamers	JRC	25.00			
109 — 9 sheet titles	JRC	41.00			
1 — Billposter Brush Bag	JRS Co.	135.00			
1 — John Robinson University 10-KW Elec. Plant		2.00			
1 — Roll Electric cable	JRC	\$20,000.00			
3 — Elephant Tubs					
1 — Menage Pedestal	JRC				
1 — Dog Bridge	SFC				
1 — Set Train Runs	SFC				
38 — Chalks	SFC				
7 — Fish Plates	JRS Co.				
2 — Goose Necks					
4 — Lemonade Trays	JRC				
4 — Ice Cream Trays	JRC				
1 — Set Dies					
1 — Champion Blower					
1 — Anvil					
6 — 5th Wheels					
1 — Set of wheels					



India or Jardiner tableau wagon in parade,  
John Robinson's Circus, Brantford, Ontario,  
Canada June 30, 1921. This was one of the  
tableau wagons Chester Monahan obtained  
from the American Circus Corporation for his  
Gollmar Bros. Circus in the fall of 1925. Pfen-  
ning Collection.

## EXHIBIT NO. 2

(Note of \$20,000 given to Jerry Mugivan by Chester J. Monahan)  
Peru, Indiana  
January 6, 1925

\$20,000.00

I promise to pay to the order of Jerry Mugivan at the office of the Wabash Valley Trust Company, Peru, Indiana, the sum of TWENTY THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$20,000.00) upon the following dates and in the following manner to-wit:

\$1000.00 due on April 4, 1925 and \$1000.00 due each and every seven days thereafter until full principal is paid, as shown by twenty notes of \$1000.00 each executed this day.

All with interest at the rate of eight per cent per annum from (Date) until paid, with attorneys fees. Value received without relief from valuation or appraisement laws. The makers and endorsers of this note jointly and severally waive notice for payment and non-payment of this note, protest and notice of protest and non-payment. Principal represents the purchase price of the following goods this day conditionally sold the payor to wit:

4 Animal Cages, 1 ticket wagon, 6 baggage wagons, 1 'KW' Universal Light Plant Complete, 1 stake puller, 1 ticket box, 6 Bill Trunks, 2 Cut Trunks, 8 Brushes, 12 Brush Handles, 1 Large Stamp outfit, 1 Stencil Stamp, 2 Tack Hammers, 2 Sledges, 1 Front Door Marquee, 8 Side Show Banners size 8 x 16, 1 Balla Stage, 4 feet high by 10 feet, 3 feet wide, 1 Dancing Stage, 9 feet x 3 feet and 4 feet high, 1 Music Stage 6 feet by 9 feet and three feet high, 1 Magician Stage 3 feet by 8 feet and 3 feet high, 1 Snake

Stage, 6 feet by 7 feet and 3 feet high, 1 Girl Stage 3 feet by 5 feet and 3 feet high, 1 Dancing Ballet Stage, 3 feet by 6 feet and 3 feet high, 1 Pit Show Banner, 1 Side Show Doorway, 1 Pit for Snakes, 1 "Jence" Electric Light plant on car, 1 sixty foot top complete, 1 Proscenium, 40 Mattresses, 40 Blankets, 40 Pillows, 160 Sheets, 160 Pillow Slips, 1 Snare Drum, 1 Street Drum, 1 Bass Drum, 1 Malleable Steel Range, 6 Gasoline Lanterns, 1 Ice Box in car, 12 Band Uniforms, 12 Band Caps, 5 dozen plates, 5 dozen small spoons, 2 dozen large spoons, 6 sixteen pound sledges, 234 jacks, 5 Dog pads, 3 sets Trappings, 3 Ponies, 1 Pony Barrel, 2 Pony Pedestals, 1000 feet of 1/2 inch rope, 1 Car seventy feet long, used as combination dining and sleeping car, with six wheel trucks, lettered "Gollmar Brothers and C.J.M." and numbered 21, 1 Car used as sleeping car, 70 feet long with four wheel trucks, lettered "Gollmar Brothers and C.J.M." and numbered 22; together with all appurtenances attaching to or forming part of any of the above described property. Also 1 Car, six wheel trucks, 70 feet long, lettered "Gollmar Brothers and C.J.M." numbered 23; 1 car, six wheel trucks 70 feet long, lettered "Gollmar Brothers and C.J.M.", and numbered 24; One car 70 feet long, with six wheel trucks, lettered "Gollmar Brothers and C.J.M." and numbered 25. 1 Elephant known as "Mary", 1 Elephant known as "Toto", 1 Elephant known as "Prince", 1 Puma, 3 Kangaroos, 1 Lion, 1 Camel, 6 Baggage Horses, 6 Ponies, 1 Hurdle Mule known as "Peanuts", 6 Sets Baggage Harness, 6 Pony Bridles, 1 Tent 75 x 145, 1 Tent 80 x 3/40s. 1 Pit Show tent 20 x 29, 2 Canvas ring curbs, 6 Seat Curtains, 1 Side Show Marquee, 1 Side show Curtain, 10 Banner Poles for Side Show, 2 Poles for Pit Show, 4 Bale Rings, 4 Main Falls, 3 Side Show Ticket Boxes, 1 Connection Stand, 1 Front Door Ticket Box, 1 Stake Puller, 4 Steel Center Poles, 5 Side Show stage ladders, 7 Front Door Posts, 4 Mud Blocks, 175 Stakes, 1 Sidewall Ladder, 6 Pieces of Seat Net, 4 Pole Jacks, 1 Side Show Stage Curtain, 4 Side Show Stage Curtains, 1 Stage cover, 1 Pit Show Curtain 32 feet long 32 feet long, 12 Cable Guys for 80 foot top, 4 flags, 64 Reserved Planks, 80 Blue Planks, 48 Blue Stringers, 18 Reserved Seat Stringers, 1 Lot of Rope, 56 foot rests, 160 Blue Plank, 68 Reserve Seat Planks, 1 Rope Elephant Harness, 1 Lot Gollmar Cuts, 410 Sheet Streamers, 1350 Sheet Titles, 50 Sheet Tiger Titles, 80 Two Sheet Streamers, 100 Nine Sheet Titles, 1 Billposter Brush Bag, 1 Universal "KW10" Electric Plant, 1

Roll Electric Cable, 3 Elephants Tubs, 1 Menage Pedestal, 1 dog Bridge, 1 set train runs, 38 Chalks, 7 Fish Plates, 2 Goose Necks, 4 Lemonade Trays, 4 Ice Cream Trays, 1 Set Dies, 1 Champion Blower, 1 Anvil, 6-Fifth Wheels, 1 Set Wheels, 12 Singletrees, 5 Double Trees, 1 Wheel Barrow, 1000 pounds of iron, 12 charis, 20 Capes and Turbans, 3 Property Coats, 4 Pony Boy Coats and Caps, 4 Property Caps, 1 Canvas Hamper, 60 days board three elephants, 60 days board two camels, 30 days board 6 horses, 1 Office Safe.

Title to and ownership to the above goods shall be and remain in the payee until the full amount of principal, interest, attorneys fees and charges and the obligation herein be fully paid and finally discharged. Insurance in the amount of \$15,000.00 shall be carried at all times, covering cars in this note to the approval of the payee in a good and reliable insurance company.

The payor shall not remove the goods from the County wherein situate without the written consent of the payee, and payor shall at all times keep displayed in a prominent place on all of the above goods, a lease tag, showing that the foresaid goods are leased of and the property of the payee.

Upon failure of the payor to make prompt payment of any one of the above notes, or upon any attempt to sell, encumber, remove, damage, transfer, dispose of or in any way to alter the present status of the above property or upon any omission of the above conditions, or at any time the payee for any cause whatsoever shall deem himself insecure, then this note shall become due and payable at once at the option of the payee, and the holder hereof, his assigns, heirs, executors, agent, administrators or assigns shall have the right to enter upon any premises wherever the above goods may be thought to be stored, without any course of law or without any notice and shall have the right to seize, take and hold the same and shall be in no wise deemed a trespasser. Failure of the payee to exercise any of his rights at any one time, shall in no wise preclude him from so doing at any time thereafter.

—s— Chester James Monahan  
—s—Myrtle Monahan

## Bill Woodcock's Circus Letterheads



The R. T. Richard's Supreme Show used this letterhead for its first season of 1917. The title is in red ink outlined in black, the drawings are in black. The frames and outlines of the illustrations are in blue.

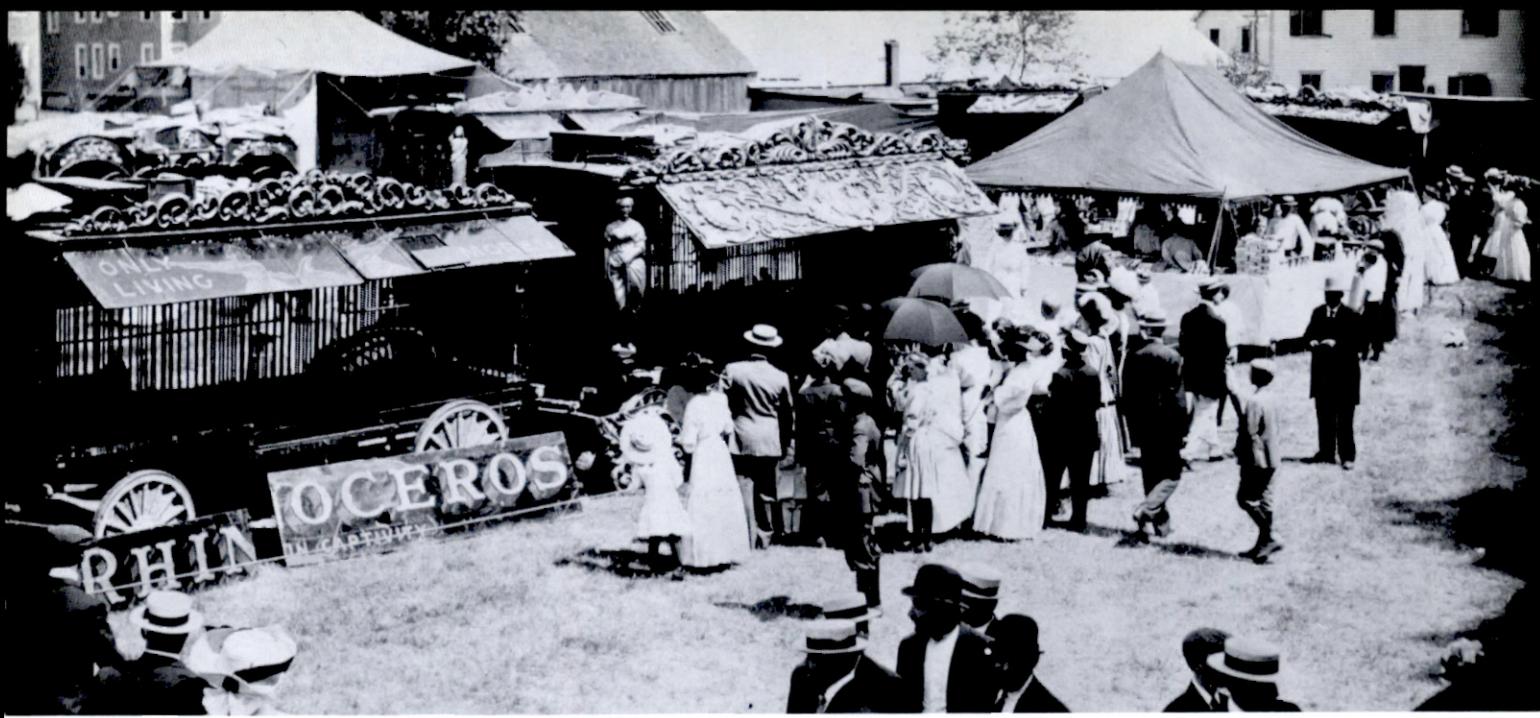


Photo No. 1. Open air menagerie of the Forepaugh Sells Circus at unknown location, 1910. Seen in the back row, left to right: former Ringling cottage cage #73, hippo den, former Forepaugh Sells tableau

den #49, former Forepaugh Sells tableau den #51; in the front row, left to right are: former Ringling rhino den, and former Forepaugh Sells tableau den #56. Harold Dunn Collection, Sarasota, Fla.

## THE GRAND PARADE OF 1910 AND 1911 FOREPAUGH SELLS CIRCUS

### PART II

By FRED D. PFENING III

The March-April, 1966, issue of the *Bandwagon*, contained the first supplement of my proposed series of articles on the parade wagons of the 1910-1911 Forepaugh Sells Circus. In the two years that have passed since that initial writing very little in the way of new information on the cages and the calliope of the show has come my way. For that reason I have delayed in continuing the articles.

Although some specific cages have been identified, my research at this stage is still in a too-general state to constitute an attempt at a full discourse on the cages and the calliope. For example: nine to eleven cages from the 1896-1907 Forepaugh Sells Circus could have been used on the 1910-1911 edition of the show; yet I have only identified six. The same ambiguity is true for the cages transferred from the Ringling Circus to Forepaugh Sells, and those from two other minor sources.

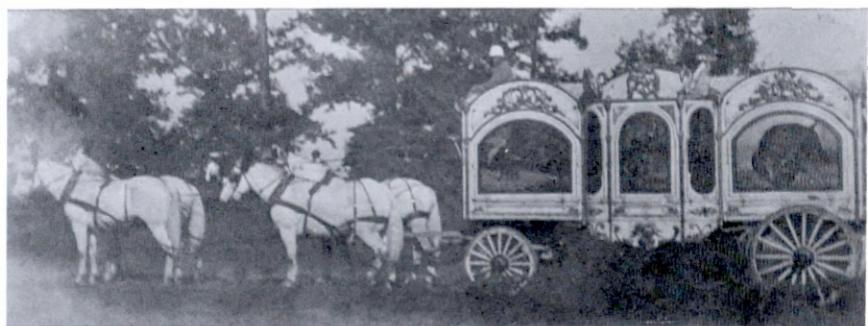
However, the picture that heads this article is significant enough to justify its writing; this picture being the only known one of the open air menagerie of the 1910 Forepaugh Sells Circus. I obtained this rare

photo from the collection of Harold Dunn in January of 1966; he, in turn, having then recently obtained it with the acquisition of the collection of Mrs. Edna Curtis Christiansen. I had access to this picture when the first article was published; however, I did not comment on it in that article in the false hope that more information would be discovered. The remainder of this article will deal with the histories of the wagons in the above picture. Shown in this picture from

Photo No. 2. Ringling cottage cage #73, 1901. This cage was extensively remodeled before it was used on the Forepaugh Sells Circus in 1910 and 1911. Trimpy photo.

left to right rear are: former Ringling cottage cage #73, the hippo den, former Forepaugh Sells tableau den #49, and former Forepaugh Sells tableau den #51; in front from left to right are the rhino den and the former Forepaugh Sells tableau den #56. The history of each follows:

THE FORMER RINGLING COTTAGE CAGE #73. This cage, was one of the group of six cottage cages used by the Ringling Circus starting about 1900 or perhaps 1899, the year after the Ringlings had leased the John Robinson show from John F. Robinson. The Robinson show is associated with these cages because of the marked similarity between them



and the set of around thirty on the John Robinson show during the years 1900-1911. This cage, along with one other from the Ringling cottage cage set, was transferred from the Ringling show to Forepaugh Sells for the years 1910-1911.

After touring with Forepaugh Sells for two years, this cage, along with three others, was shipped from Baraboo, and added to the inventory of the Downie and Wheeler Circus at Kenova, West Virginia, on 30 April 1912. Photo No. 10 is the only piece of documentation to verify that #73 cages was indeed sold to Downie and Wheeler.

**THE HIPPOPOTOMUS DEN.** The history of this wagon is vague. Before the 1910 season the Moeller Bros. wagon shop charged the Ringlings \$83.85 to repair what was noted in the Moeller account book as the "Forepaugh Hippo Den," indicating that the wagon was part of the group shipped to either Bridgeport or Baraboo after the 1907 tour of the Forepaugh Sells Circus. However, the many pictures of the famous hippo den on the 1896-1907 Forepaugh Sells Circus show a rather crude den, void of statues and carvings, and completely different than the one shown in the 1910 menagerie view. The most logical reason for this discrepancy is the possibility that the old den (shown on page 8 of the January-February 1964, *Bandwagon*) was replaced in the later years of the Forepaugh Sells show by this new one.

This cage's first photographic appearance after 1910 is in a circa 1916 publicity picture taken inside the paint shop of the Barnum and Bailey winter quarters in Bridgeport. This hippo den most likely came into Bridgeport in the early months of 1912 when ten railroad cars, including three flats, were shipped from the Ringling quarters to the Barnum and Bailey quarters. It can be conjectured that this den was on Barnum and Bailey until 1919 when the shows combined. The Ringling Bros.-Barnum and Bailey used the ex-Ringling show hippo den, making the Barnum and Bailey den surplus. In the very early 1920's this cage was sold to the John Robinson Circus where it last appears about 1922. The sale of this hippo cage to the American Circus Corporation is the only known case of the ACC buying equipment from Ringling interests.

**THE FORMER FOREPAUGH SELLS TABLEAU DEN #49.** This cage, along with #51 and #56 in this article, was part of the famous group of twenty-four carved cages that appeared on the original Forepaugh Sells Circus. The build-up of these fine cages evidently began the first year of the combined shows, 1896

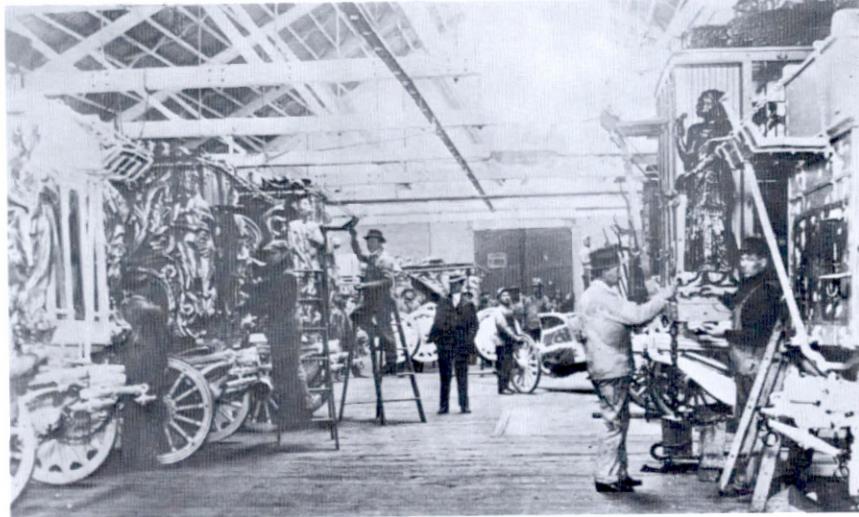


Photo No. 3. Interior of the paint shop at the Bridgeport winterquarters of the Barnum and Bailey Circus, circa 1916. On the right

can be seen the corner statue, and part of the skyboard of the hippo den used on the Forepaugh Sells Circus in 1910 and 1911.



Photo No. 4. The former Forepaugh Sells hippo den on the John Robinson Circus

about 1920. The wagon appears to have been rebuilt a bit by this time. Woodcock Col.



Photo No. 5 The former Forepaugh Sells tableau den #49 on J. H. Garrett's Rice Bros. Circus in 1913. At this time the cage was

in a different configuration than when it appeared on the 1910-1911 Forepaugh Sells Circus. W. H. Woodcock Collection.

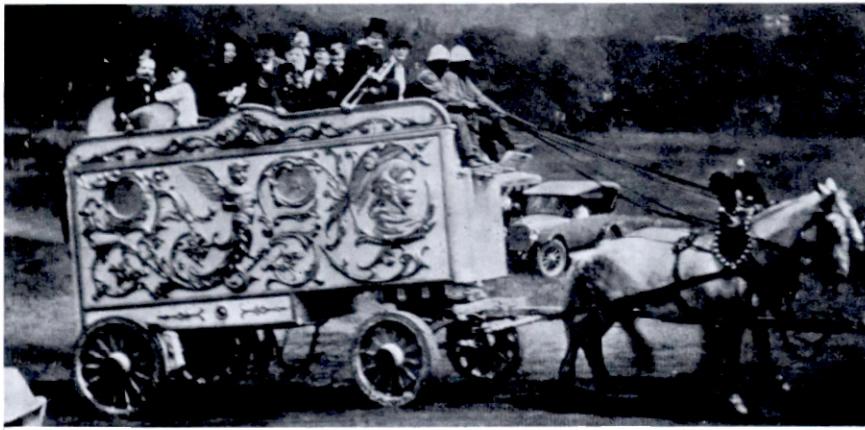


Photo No. 6 The #49 cage was used as the clown bandwagon on the John Robinson Circus in this circa 1923 picture. W. H. Woodcock Collection.

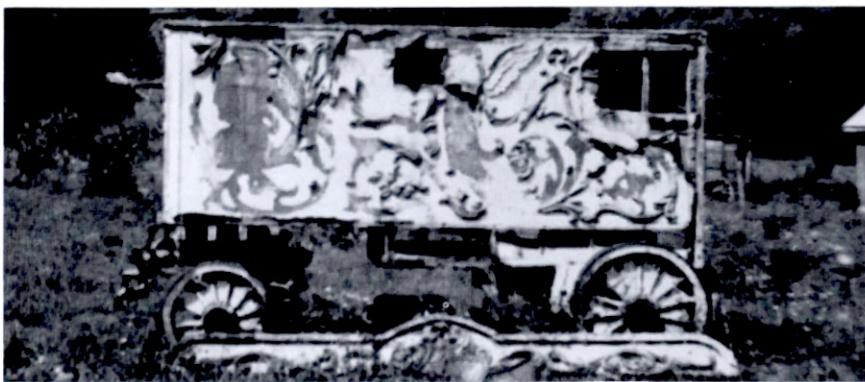


Photo No. 7. The #49 tableau cage rotting down, probably West Baden, Indiana about 1925. By this time, the carvings and the mirrors had been stolen off the wagon. Note that the wagon was now a tableau-baggage wagon rather than a tableau cage. P. M. McClintock Collection.

when twelve cages, including #49, were on the show. In 1901 the total had reached between seventeen and nineteen, and by 1904 the final total of twenty-four had been reached. The last five wagons at least were built by the George Schmidt Wagon Works of Cincinnati, Ohio.

After the Forepaugh Sells show was removed from the road in 1907, twelve to fourteen of these cages were sent to Baraboo, and the remainder were integrated into the Barnum and Bailey menagerie. The only notoriety this cage achieved during its tenure on the original Forepaugh Sells show was that in its early years, it housed the show's rhino. This rhino was part of the large group of animals the Adam Forepaugh Circus loaned the Washington D. C. Zoo in 1893. In 1896 the Forepaugh Sells show reprocessed the rhino. By 1904 the rhino had died.

This cage's first utilization after being on the Forepaugh Sells Circus in 1910 and 1911 was on 25 February 1913 when John H. Garrett purchased it, another cage, two tableaus, and the St. George and the Dragon pony Float from the Ringlings for the sum of \$385.00. After Garrett's show Rice Bros. failed in 1913 the equipment was acquired by W. E. Franklin. In 1915 Franklin sold the remainder of the Rice equipment to the Wortham Carnival owned by Clarence A. Wortham.

The cage was evidently used on one of the Wortham units until 1917 when it was sold to the American Circus Corporation along with some elephants. It was first used by the Howes Great London Show, and after 1922, the John Robinson show. A 1924 photograph of this cage on the John Robinson show is the last known photo of it on a show. We are fortunate in having Photo No. 7 showing the wagon rotting down, probably at West Baden, Indiana.

Sometime after it appeared on Forepaugh Sells and before it was sold to Garrett it was remodeled into a tableau. The carvings were again rearranged and put on a new wagon when the American Circus Corporation acquired the wagon.

**THE FORMER FOREPAUGH SELLS TABLEAU DEN #51.** This cage is another of the set from the original Forepaugh Sells Circus. After the 1910-1911 Forepaugh Sells show closed, this cage with some other equipment was purchased by Fred Buchanan for his fast-expanding

Photo No. 8. Carved cage line-up on the Forepaugh Sells Circus about 1904. On the left is the #49 cage, in the middle is the #51 cage, and on the right is another carved cage, number undetermined. All three of these cages were on the 1910-1911 Forepaugh Sells Circus, and the first two appear in the photo that heads this article. From the original negative in the collection of Richard E. Conover.





**Photo No. 9.** Former Forepaugh Sells tableau den #51 on Fred Buchanan's Yankee Robinson Circus, circa 1915. W. H. Woodcock Collection.

Yankee Robinson Circus. The exact date of this transaction is not definitely known, but it can be narrowed down to two notes from the *Billboard*. The first of these is from the *Billboard* of 30 December 1911: "Chicago show circles were stirred this week by the rumor that Fred Buchanan, owner of the Yankee Robinson Circus, had purchased ten carloads of effects of the Forepaugh-Sells Circus from the Ringlings." This reference would tend to be an exaggeration. The other from the 21 December 1912 issue noted that six new animal dens had arrived at the Yankee Robinson winter quarters from Baraboo. In either case this cage was definitely on the Yankee Robinson Circus, and it evidently remained there until the show was sold first to W. P. Hall, and then to the American Circus Corporation.

**THE FORMER FOREPAUGH SELLS TABLEAU DEN #56.** We are indebted to Frederick W. Glasier for taking Photo No. 11, which is the only known one of this cage on the original Forepaugh Sells Circus. This picture is doubly valuable because it clearly identifies its number. This cage was part of the group that were added to the Downie and Wheeler Circus during the early part of the 1912 season. It served on the Downie and Wheeler show until its final season a year later.

After the 1913 break-up of the Downie and Wheeler Circus the equipment was split three ways: some was used on Andrew Downie's new La-Tena Circus, some on Wheeler's small Wheeler Bros. Circus, and some was sold to the Jones Bros. and Wilson Circus. It appears most logical this



**Photo No. 11.** Cage #56 in its original configuration on the Forepaugh Sells Circus about 1904. Glasier Photo, Ringling Museum of the American Circus.

cage was on the Jones Bros. and Wilson Circus in 1914, although the possibility of it being on the Wheeler show should not be ruled out. The chance that it was on the LaTena Circus in 1914 is very slight.

In any case the wagon was definitely on the Jones' Bros. World Toured Shows in 1915, being used as the number one bandwagon. In 1916 the title was changed to Cole Bros. World Toured Shows. It was evidently used on that show until the mid-season 1918 closing caused by the death of James Augustus Jones, the owner.

**THE RHINO DEN:** Like the hippo den, the history of the rhino den is not readily ascertainable. The Moeller Wagon Shop repaired a rhino den for the Forepaugh Sells Circus before the 1910 season, indicating that the wagon was not built new for the Forepaugh Sells Show, but rather had been used on the Ringling show for at least the 1909 season. The existence of this den on the Ringling show in 1909 is odd, considering that the Ringling show had another very fine den on the show at that time.

To complicate matters more, a 1912 Ringling parade list notes that the

show had "Forepaugh Rhino Den No. 27" in the parade that year. From this we are able to place the rhino den of the 1910 menagerie shot on the Ringling show in 1912. Nothing further is known of it.

The six cages covered in this article make up only a little less than one-third of the total menagerie of the 1910 and 1911 Forepaugh Sells Circus. It is hoped that in the near future the remainder of the cages and the all important calliope can be covered in a similar fashion.

I would like to thank Sverre O. Braathen, Richard E. Conover, and Harold Dunn for their help in the preparation of this paper.

**Photo No. 12.** When the former Forepaugh #56 cage was on the Jones Bros. Circus in 1915 it was the number one bandwagon. The next season this wagon was on the Cole Bros. Circus. Charles Bernard Photo now in the Robert Good collection.



**Photo No. 10.** The Downie and Wheeler Circus on the lot, location unknown 1912. In the right front is the former Forepaugh Sells cage #56, and in the center, partially hidden by a canvas is the

former Ringling cottage cage #73. Both these wagons are in the lead picture of this article. Author's Collection.



# TAXABLE VALUE OF CIRCUS GOODWILL

by John M. Kelly  
edited by Fred D. Pfening, III

## Part 3

**Campbell Brothers Great Consolidated Shows.** Campbell Brothers, starting in a very small way, equipped and put out a wagon show, enlarging it year by year. They were successful financially. There were three brothers,<sup>30</sup> each of them directly associated in the building and operation of the show. From the successful wagon show they organized and put out a railroad show, beginning with a seven to ten car show, with which they were likewise successful.

About the year 1904 or 1905 they began enlarging their circus until they built it to twenty-five cars. This show had back of it the same men that had been successful with the smaller railroad shows. With the big show they were complete failures. With the wagon show and the smaller railroad show they accumulated considerable property and enjoyed good credit. Closed by the sheriff August 10, 1912.

The big show was to them a losing proposition from its beginning. They not only lost all their property, but the bank that had lent large sums failed with the circus.

**J. H. La Pearl Circus.** J. H. La Pearl built up and operated for many years a two-car railroad show. It was recognized as one of the successful enterprises of its class on the road. Then he increased his show to a five-car outfit, which met with fair success. Next he increased the circus to a fifteen-car show and came to speedy financial failure.

Sold at auction at Camden, N. J. The physical show property sold for little, the name and good will for nothing.

**Barton & Bailey World's Celebrated Shows.** A 17 car show put out in 1915 by John A. Barton, principal owner, together with Thomas F. Weidemann and William P. Hall.

This outfit was well equipped and made attractive. Ostensibly it was put out to trade upon the name Bailey, master showman and chief of the field in his day.

It failed before the season was half over. Closed at Missoula, July 27. William P. Hall shipped the remains to Lancaster, Mo.<sup>31</sup>

**Frank P. Spellman's Combined Circus, Inc.** This and the succeeding venture represent two of the more conspicuous of many attempts of Spellman in the circus business.

The above named circus opened at Dayton, April 30, 1914, and was closed by attachment May 30 of the same year.

**United States Circus Corporation.** The record of this experiment is more of a warning than an illustration. It is convincing proof that money does not make the circus "mare" go.

This circus was built more in the prospectus than on the lot. Pretentious New York offices were opened, from which emanated a notorious stock-selling campaign. The "circus" was to be motorized.

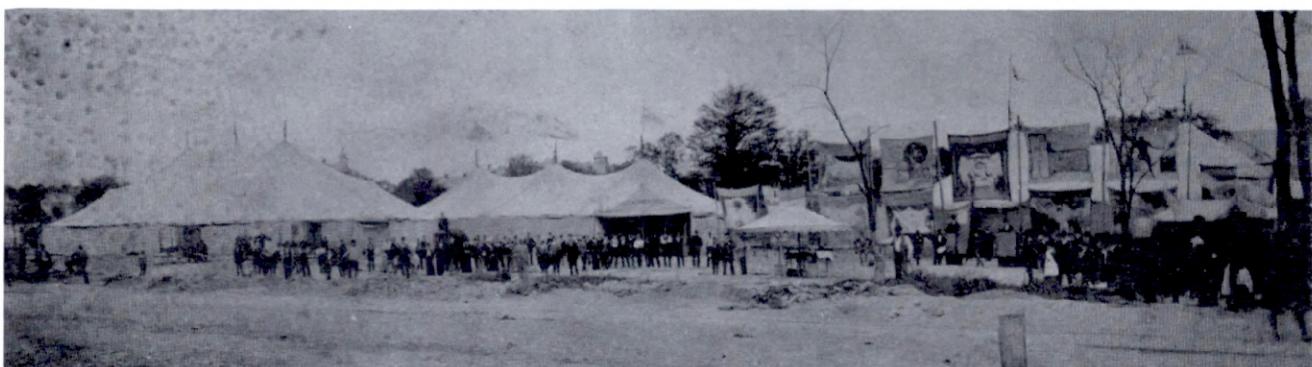
One Frank P. Spellman featured in the exploitation. It is reported that stockholders parted with no less than a quarter of a million dollars. A few tableaux were beautifully carved, put onto auto trucks and a makeshift for a show finally arranged.

**Bob Hunting Circus, Mt. Vernon, N. Y., May 14, 1894. Pfening Collection.**

The outfit holds the world's record for playing the shortest season. When Polly of the Circus said "the show must go on" she looked at an experienced manager and not at a promoter.<sup>32</sup>

**Gentry Shows.** For more than a third of a century the name Gentry stood for the best in show business. It was backed by an enterprise well managed and successful. The show at first was known as Professor Gentry Shows, owned by H. B. Gentry, with whom three brothers were identified. Fired by his success H. B. Gentry equipped and put out a circus for each of the three brothers. Each show was operated under the name Gentry Bros. by men of the same name and men who had been theretofore identified with the original Gentry Show. The organization operated by H. B. Gentry was the only one that survived. The others failed dismally. One of them was purchased by a Minneapolis concern that, in connection with it, advertised International Stock Food. This concern, with ample capital, put out a well organized show, used the same name, same sort of advertising, gave the same sort of performance as the show conducted by H. B. Gentry. It lost heavily and retired. During all this time Gentry Bros. Shows, under the management of H. B. Gentry, operated with success.

About 1917 H. B. Gentry sold his shows to J. D. Newman and J. B. Austin, men who had spent the better part of a lifetime with the best and biggest shows of the country and had experience in every department of circus management. Furthermore, they had been identified with H. B. Gentry



in his management of the show. After operating six years the circus, late in the 1922 season, fell into the hands of the receiver.

And thus again a name and a show that had been for a generation foremost in its class and of great value to its builder proved to be of little value to another.

**Mighty Haag Shows.** For a number of years this circus operated successfully as a wagon show throughout the South. The owner, Ernest Haag, in 1910 enlarged the circus and made it into a railroad show. He continued to operate the railroad show until 1914, having enlarged it to a 14 car circus. As a railroad show under the same management it proved a dismal failure. It was closed out, the railroad equipment going to a carnival company. Haag went back again to the old wagon show and continued with moderate success.

The point of greatest value a showman can learn is to recognize his limitations in the size of show that he can organize and successfully operate.

**Sun Bros. Circus.** Operated successfully for years as a wagon show under management of George and Pete Sun. From a wagon show they built up a railroad show and for several years operated with fair success. George Sun died, leaving his brother Pete the surviving manager. With George out of the show it failed after one or two years' trial. At the close of the 1918 season it was sold out piecemeal. No purchaser could be found for the name or title. The name, always valuable to George Sun, was of small worth to anyone else, not even his surviving brother.

While George Sun was always looked upon as the leading showman, yet no one could say that the success of the circus was due alone to his personal skill until he died and the surviving brother undertook to fill his shoes. The good-will interest of the deceased George Sun was of little value.

**M. L. Clark & Sons Wagon Shows.** A widely known and well recognized attraction as a wagon show. From a wagon show it was put out as a spic and span railroad show under the same name and management. It did not last the season through.<sup>33</sup>

**Palmer Brothers Big Three-Ring Wild Animal Circus.** Operated by Backman & Tinsch for several years as a two-car show with success. Palmer, for many years identified as employee with big show attractions, formed a partnership with Backman & Tinsch, and together they put out (1921) a ten car show under above name. Despite experience and management the show went the way of the majority—failed, sold by the sheriff, losses heavy.



The Japan Tableaux wagon is shown on the Pawnee Bill Wild West and Great Far East about 1900. Beggs Photo.

**Wiedeman Shows.** Wiedeman started with a one car show and successfully went along building up his organization until he established a ten car show. This he conducted successfully for several years, when his ambition led him to put out a twenty car show. This was an utter failure.

**Campbell-Bailey-Hutchinson Circus and Wild West.** 1920-1922. The men who equipped and put out this show in 1920 had been identified with various large successful circuses all their lives. They had experience in every department of the circus business. They put out a new railroad show and appropriated to it the names Campbell-Bailey-Hutchinson—names famous in the circus world for half a century.

If there is any value to good will or name in the circus business it would have been evident here. The show was a failure from the first. Its owners stressed every effort to keep it on its slegs and bring to it success. They took in a new partner and added capital, but before the close of its third season it passed out, with creditors sharing in the distress.

**Walter L. Main Circus.** William Main, father of Walter L. Main, established under his name the circus as a wagon show. When the son, Walter L., reached his majority he, with his mother, took over the management of the circus. For the first two years the show went out under the title William Main Shows, Walter L. Main, America's youngest showman, sole proprietor. After two years or so the title was changed to "Walter L. Main Circus." This circus went on rails on or about 1887.<sup>34</sup> In the hands of Walter L. Main the circus had a sort of hard-picking success—a few good years, many that were lean, coming finally to financial embarrassment. For one season W. E. Franklin, an experienced showman, was identified with the management. Franklin withdrew. For a time, with varying

degrees of success, Walter L. Main kept out the circus, finally disposing of it by piecemeal. After several years' retirement he put a show together and painted his name on it. This show has in recent years been operated under the exclusive management of Andrew Downie, in whose experienced capable hands it has continued a successful enterprise in its class.

**Young Buffalo's Wild West & Texas Rangers.** Organized and put out by Colonel Seaver, featuring the name Buffalo. He equipped a model 21 car show, well organized with good attractions. It lasted through 1910 and 1911.

The next season (1912) found the outfit moving with two important additions—it added another Colonel and another name.

**Young Buffalo's Wild West and Colonel Cumming's Great Far East Combined.** 1912. Colonel Seaver and Colonel Cummings proprietors.

Believing that there is something in a name, the next year found the outfit with an additional prefix—

**Vernon C. Seaver's Hippodrome, Young Buffalo's Wild West and Colonel Cumming's Far East.** 1913-1914. Same proprietors. Although distinguished by colonels and embellished by titles, the venture never was a success. It came to the hands of receiver July 28, 1914.

**Frank A. Robbins All Feature Shows.** 1906-1915. Frank A. Robbins built up from a small beginning a successful railroad circus of the 15 car class. It was well equipped, carried a valuable menagerie and for a number of years was fairly successful. In the last analysis it was a question of management. He built bigger than he could handle. He gradually cut down and cut down to keep going. Finally the show was sold by the Erie Lithograph Co. to satisfy claims of creditors.

**Sangers Greater European Circus.** This had been the circus supreme in Europe before the entry of Barnum & Bailey. In 1911 Mugavin & Bowers put out a well-equipped railroad cir-



This photo taken at the winter quarters of the Sig Sautelle & Welsh Bros. Combined Shows in 1905. Jim Dunwoody Collection.

cus under this title. After three years' trial under their management in the best show territory of this country it proved a failure. Its former good will and its name had no transfer value. During the third season while on the road the title was stripped from the circus and in its stead appeared the name Robinson's Famous Shows.

**Harris Nickel Plate Shows.** For years under the management of Harris, the builder, the circus was a success in the 10 to 15 car class. It enjoyed a good reputation and made money.

Harris died. His estate, through experienced management (for years identified with Harris), undertook to continue the show. It dragged along for a year and failed (1904). Closed out to Wm. P. Hall for a fraction of its cost.

**Welch Bros. Circus.** Two brothers from a small beginning with a wagon show built their circus up to the fifteen car class. It was a successful enterprise up to this point. Then it ceased to make money. Reducing it again to old standards, they tried to stem the decline, but the show was finally closed out September 15, 1915.

#### Sig. Sautelle's Circus.

**Sig. Sautelle's Nine Big Railroad Shows.** First built as a canal boat show. Outgoing the canal boat and wagon show class it was made into a railroad circus and slowly built up to a prosperous 25 car show. Then came the mistake common to so many showmen of building beyond the capacity of the management.

The outfit was finally purchased by J. T. McCaddon (brother-in-law of James A. Bailey), a man well trained in circus building and management. He fitted out this circus and shipped it to France. Its failure abroad was so complete that it was utterly abandoned on the lot at Grenoble, France.<sup>36</sup>

Sautelle individually and with various combinations afterwards tried to re-establish the circus under the old

name in this country. It went out in 1913 and 1914. Failed July 31, 1914. Taken over by Louis D. Thilman. After nine months on the road the outfit "broke" him. Creditors closed the show Oct. 2. It finally came to the wrecking house of William P. Hall.<sup>36</sup>

**The Great John O'Brien's Shows.** In its day second to the Adam Forepaugh Circus. This institution died in 1889 after having been before the public for a generation.<sup>37</sup>

**Bob Hunting Shows.** The history of this show parallels somewhat the La Pearl Shows. Hunting was first a performer. His family were performers and his whole life was spent in the atmosphere of tent shows. From a small beginning by the piece by piece method he built up a twelve car show. Then he built beyond his capacity to handle—and circus history listed another failure.

Later in other hands also the show under this name went to pieces. No good will value.

**G. W. Hargreave Circus.** Once a good show enjoying a fair measure of success. In the hands of purchasers it went quickly to pieces. The reputation of the show, its success, its name and its experience counted for little in the hands of new management.

**John S. McMahon Shows.** The McMahons built up their show to fifteen cars. For a long time—1881-1898—while operated by the McMahons this show met with dependable success in its field on the Pacific coast.

After the death of the McMahons the show in the hands of the estate and survivors was a failure.

**Davis & Talbot.** In 1887 went out as a new, well-equipped twenty-five car railroad show—in those days a big show. It did not last the season

through. Seized by the sheriff—sold on attachment at a sacrifice.

**Mollie Bailey Shows.** The Mollie Bailey shows was established beyond any other amusement feature as a small-town attraction in Texas and the Southwest. She first put out a wagon show. Her children were brought up on the "lot." They participated in the show, were musicians, performers and generally useful. Later Mollie Bailey Shows became a two car railroad show. The boys grew to manhood in the business, married and with their wives participated in the performance and management, with Mollie Bailey always the managing head. Mollie Bailey perhaps was identified with her circus twenty years or more. She died in the business. Her sons and their families, after her death, continued the same show under the same name in the same established territory. They were dismal failures. The property that Mollie Bailey circus had accumulated was dissipated in fruitless endeavors to keep the show going. The Mollie Bailey show finally died on the lot.

**Greater Norris & Rowe Circus.** Put out by C. I. Norris and H. S. Rowe—"That California Circus." At one time the best known circus on the Pacific coast and operated with much success. It had splendid physical equipment, magnificent carved parade wagons, was well advertised and the name a household word through the Northwest. Norris withdrew and entered the theatrical field, in which he likewise met with success.

H. S. Rowe continued the Norris-Rowe Circus. It went through the 1909 season with diminishing success every day it was out. He painted up the show and put it out new the following season, 1910, but it was doomed to failure. Closed under attachment May 9, 1910. It was sold piecemeal by Peru Trust Co. at a mere fraction of its cost.

The next season or so other experienced showmen, knowing the reputation of the circus under Norris, equipped and put out a show under the name. After spending a great deal of money in an ambitious attempt to get something from the good will it failed disastrously. The show lasted about three weeks.

The circus finally came to the hands of William P. Hall at a cost reported at \$1,400.

**Great Van Amburgh Shows.** Van Amburgh was at one time a partner of P. T. Barnum. Built splendid shows and handled them with success.<sup>38</sup>

The Van Amburgh Circus exhibited in London in 1847 to the greatest business of any circus up to that time.<sup>39</sup>

In 1904 Mugivan & Bowers put out their first show under this name. After four years' trial they stripped

the name from their property. The next season (1908) the equipment went out under the name Howe's Great London Shows.

Circus ventures under the Van Amburg name have met with little reward.

**Howe's Great London Shows.** Put out in 1908 by Jerry Mugivan and Bert Bowers, owners. This circus, varying in size from about a sixteen car show to a twenty-one car show, they operated 1908-1916. Its measure of success may be inferred from its retirement at the close of the 1916 season.

In 1920 this circus again went out as a fifteen car show owned by Jerry Mugivan, Bert Bowers, Ed. Ballard and Dan Odom.

The next season (1921) the circus went out as a twenty-five car show under the combined names of Howe's Great London Circus & Van Amburg's Trained Wild Animals.

At the close of the season 1921 the name was stripped from the show, and upon the same equipment for 1922 appeared the name Gollmar Bros. Circus. The title—Howe's Great London Circus—was leased to M. E. Golden, who purchased Palmer Bros. Circus.

Accordingly, by the magic of the paint brush, the 15 car equipment which the year previously had borne the name Palmer Brothers, in 1922 went out as Howe's Great London Circus & Van Amburg's Trained Animals, in the hands of M. E. Golden et al.

**Wheeler Bros.** An old-established circus name. 1911-1913 the organization was known as Downie & Wheeler's World's Best Shows. As a 10 car show it met with fair success in the hands of Downie & Wheeler. In 1913 Downie withdrew. In 1914 the show was put out by Al. F. Wheeler under the name Wheeler Bros. Greater Shows and Great Stampede Wild West. As a 10 car outfit Wheeler handled it with fair success. Then he fell into error common to so many showmen who built beyond their capacity to handle.

The show (1916) was built up to the 30 car class and put out as Wheeler Bros. Enormous Shows. Wheeler had made connection for unlimited capital. No expense was spared to make the organization complete in every respect. It had the old Wheeler name and reputation back of it.

It was a complete failure from every viewpoint. A heavy loser, it was shipped back to old winter quarters and sold piecemeal.

The management which proved adequate in handling the circus as a wagon show and a small railroad show, was with the big show, even



The clown band shown ready for parade on the Howe's Great London Show on July 10, 1915, in Marshfield, Wisconsin. The banner is in opposition to Sparks. Pfening Collection.

though better and more handsomely equipped and with plenty of capital backing it, a complete failure.

**Rhoda Royal World Toured Shows & Old Buffalo Wild West.** In 1920 put out by Rhoda Royal and associates as a 15-car circus. It struggled the season through.

**Rhoda Royal Circus.** 1921-1922. Closed April 17, 1922, after being out a few weeks. A series of hopeless experiments. Equipment seized by the Erie Lithograph Co.

In the foregoing enterprises Rhoda Royal was the dominant figure. He was identified for years with different prominent circuses and was a successful exhibitor and trainer of animal acts. Yet the acid test comes when one undertakes to function in the management, organization, routing and transportation of a show.

**Cook & Wilson's Greatest Trained Animal Show on Earth.** This circus—a 15 car outfit—was launched in April, 1916, by D. Clinton Cook of Trenton and H. G. Wilson of Philadelphia. Closed with heavy losses in August.

**Cook Bros. World's Greatest Shows (Inc.).** put out by D. Clinton Cook in 1917 as a ten car show. Closed a failure at Dyersville, Iowa, August 17 of the same year.

This outfit appropriated the term World's Greatest Shows, a trade name created, owned and established by Ringling Brothers for over a third of a century.

But this attempt presumably to operate under the trade name and reputation of another failed, as similar attempts have so often failed in the circus world. It failed dismally with Adam Forepaugh, Jr., in 1893, when he put out an independent show featuring the name Forepaugh, then the

property of Bailey. Like results followed the attempt of Luella Forepaugh Fish outfit in the use of the Forepaugh name. We find a striking example of such failures in the attempt of Willie Sells and his combination in the use of the name Sells.

For similar instances of trademark infringement see Cole Shows, Coop & Lent, Robinson, Bailey.

Was it Pope who wrote—  
"Be not the first by whom the new  
is tried,  
Nor yet the last to lay the old aside."

The showman in choosing a name for his caravan has taken the first line of Pope's stanza as his creed.

Springtime always brings out two important features rich in color and splendor—the Easter bonnet and a new circus. And so we find the venturesome showman recruiting outfit or caravan to go forth in the amusement world under a name made famous by another. As a rule the outfit is so much at variance, in point of talent and equipment, with the institution that established the name that the public is seldom misled.

Practically all these infringement ventures may be summed up as proof of the old statement that one cannot get "something for nothing." The circus has proved a hazardous field for the experiment.

**Irwin Bros. Cheyenne Days Frontier Wild West Shows.** This show, from a modest beginning, was gradually built up to the twenty-five car class, and attained a fair measure of success. In the hands of transferees it suffered speedy decline. Abruptly closed in 1914, a failure.

**Miles Orton Circus.**

**Orton Bros. Circus.** An old-established circus. The circus under Miles Orton grew to a twenty-car show and was established before the Ringling Bros. were in business. His success was made with a wagon show. The circus failed only when they made it into a railroad show and enlarged it beyond their capacity to successfully

operate. With the circus went most of their savings. The problem of organization and operation of the big show was beyond them.

The Ortons were prominent as performers. Many times the show went "broke," only again to reorganize in a vain attempt to spell success out of the old name. The last Orton Circus went out (R. Z. Orton) in 1916, a thirteen-car show. It failed on the 4th of July stand. The remains of the show went to William P. Hall.

#### **John H. Sparks Old Reliable Virginia Shows.**

#### **John H. Sparks World's Famous Shows.**

**Sparks Circus.** Charles Sparks has for many years had his circus before the public under titles in the order named, closing the 1922 season with a 15 car show. Sparks began with a small outfit and built his show "from the ground up." Sparks is one of the few showmen who in circus building has not ventured beyond his capacity to operate. For 1923 Sparks Shows enter the 20 car class.

its opening Al G. Barnes has annually put out the show and has built it up to the 30 car class. It is a Barnes show, built by Barnes, operated by Barnes and in his hands a success among shows of its class.

**Leon Washburn Circus.** By close application and the "never-say-die" spirit Leon Washburn in the course of a few years built up a show to the 20 car class. Its cost investment was high. It enjoyed a good reputation.

Notwithstanding his best efforts the circus went to the wall about ten years ago—sold piece by piece at a sacrifice.

**Lemon Brothers Circus.** A well-known established show of the 25-car class. After twenty years of "hit and miss" struggles in the hands of its owner it failed and was closed out. The name and good will are on the shelf without a taker.

**James Patterson's Trained Animal Shows and Gollmar Bros. Circus.** Took over the Gollmar Circus and in

frequently runs low on coin of the realm, but it seldom runs low on paint. The next season—1918—the equipment went out bearing the name Walter L. Main Fashion Plate Shows.

**Cummins Wild West and Indian Congress.** Operated season 1906 with Colonel Cummins, Walter L. Main and others back of it. Closed Sept. 28. Later destroyed by fire. No insurance.<sup>40</sup>

**Jones Brothers Buffalo Ranch Wild West Shows.** 1910 operated by J. Augustus Jones as a 14 car show. Failure. Sold in parcels by Peru Trust Co.

**California Frank's All Star Wild West Show.** Operated season 1911 as an 11 car outfit by Edward Arlington, California Frank and others. Unsuccessful. Off the road.

**Prairie Lillie & Nebraska Bill's Wild West Combination.** Operated 1912 by Welsh Bros. Title changed for the next year to Wyoming Bill's Wild West.

**Wyoming Bill's Wild West.** Stayed out two years, 1913-1914, under Welsh



This unusual band chariot was used on the Pan American Circus in 1903 and 1904. The Pan American title was used on the Lemon Bros. Circus these two seasons. Burt Wilson Collection.

**Bulger & Cheney Railroad Shows.** Went out in the spring of 1911, only to close a failure July 6. Struggled to its feet again July 26, only to close for good September 11. The fragments of this outfit the next season went into the Rice Bros. Colossal Railroad Shows.

**Rice Bros. Colossal Railroad Shows.** The term "colossal" had greater application in describing its failure than its equipment. With J. H. Garrett at its head it opened season of 1913 at Minneapolis May 9 with much ado. Attachment closed the doors September 1. Sold at public auction November 25.

**Al G. Barnes Circus.** Organized and put out by Barnes in 1910. Made up in part from a carnival show. Since



A live buffalo tableau used in the parade of the Kit Carson Wild West during the 1913 season. Woodcock Collection.

Brothers as a 10 car outfit, and then off the road for good.

**Circle "D" Wild West and Cooper Brothers Famous Shows.** Put out season 1914, Mr. Dickey, owner. Opened April 25. Closed July 6. Unsuccessful. Losses heavy.

**The Great Luella Forepaugh Fish Wild West Show.** Put out at St. Louis 1893.<sup>41</sup> Its name included "Forepaugh." July 25 attached at Janesville, Wisconsin. Reorganized and opened at Appleton Sept. 4. Lasted but a few days, when it went to pieces at Ishpeming, Michigan.

**Great Dode Fisk Shows.** 1909-1910. An 11 car circus. Financial failure. Sold to Mugivan & Bowers, who next year put the physical property on the road under the name Sanger's Greater European Shows.

**William H. Coulter's Famous Rail-**

road Shows. Out in 1911 as a 15 car circus, owned by Coulter, Hoogawangan & Embree.

Classed among showmen as a "huge" failure.

On July 26 of the same year a combination was made of the Coulter Show with Indian Pete's Wild West Show. This combination started out as a 24 car show. Failure closed the doors Sept. 9, and the physical property that was left of it followed the well-beaten trail of dissipated shows to the wrecking house of William P. Hall. (This property, or part of it, was in other hands the following year, made into a show that carried the name Cole Brothers World Toured Shows.)

**Kit Carson's Buffalo Ranch Wild West Shows.** Put out by P. Augustus Jones.

In 1911-1914 operated by Thomas F. Wiedeman as a 12 car show.

Failed October 24, 1914, and the receiver took charge.

**Oklahoma Ranch Wild West.** Put out 1913 by Fred Beckman, with Edward Arlington interested as investor only. Built into a 17 car show, well equipped, with attractions of international reputation. Closed Oct. 18 of same season, a losing, disappointing venture.

It is reported that Edward Arlington lost \$54,000 in this venture.

**Miller Bros. 101 Ranch Wild West Show.** Operated season 1908, with Miller Bros. owners.<sup>42</sup> The next season the show went out billed as

**Miller Bros. & Ed. Arlington's 101 Ranch Real Wild West.** Operated 1909 to 1915 and built up to a 30 car show. In 1915, having operated for five years, Arlington withdrew. After his retirement Miller Bros. never put out the show.

**Buffalo Bill & 101 Ranch Shows.** This is the title of a 30 car show put out in 1916 by Ed. Arlington, featuring Jess Willard as an attraction.

**Jess Willard & Buffalo Bill Shows.** (Formerly 101 Ranch Wild West.) Operated season 1917 by Jess Willard as a 28 car show.

Failure. Property sold out. Thus ends the big Wild West combinations, for a time front-rank contenders and fairly successful. But the success of these enterprises was fleeting even while in the hands of their builders. No material good will value was ever realized or transferred in them to operating successors.

**Pawnee Bill's Historic Wild West.** Put out by Gordon W. Lillie (Pawnee Bill), who has been identified with the show business since 1883.<sup>43</sup> Withdrew the show from the road 1908 to combine with Buffalo Bill.

A group of Circus Failures.

Fortunes have been spent in building circuses. Fortunes have been lost in fruitless attempts to keep them going. Name, good will, reputation have counted for little in the transfer of circuses. In 100 years it has never figured as an item of any consequence.

In a losing game the circus has struggled hard for self-preservation. Name and good will have been a mere incident.

We add the following to the already long list of circus failures:

King & Burke Circus, Forepaugh & Samuels, Shields Bros. Circus, Miller, Stowe & Freeman Circus, the Gillespie Shows, Burch Bros. Circus, R. T. Richards Circus, Aaron Turner Circus, Nixon, Costello & Howes Circus, John O'Brien's World Fair Circus, Hardenburg's Circus, Sheldenburg's Circus, P. A. Old's Circus, J. E. Warner & Co. Circus, Roston, Springer & Henderson Circus, John B. Davis Circus, Central Park Circus, the Great Eastern Circus, American Racing Association Circus, Stone & Murray Circus, Clark Ames Circus, J. H. Eschman's World United Railroad Circus, Hugo Brothers Modern United Shows, J. H. Frenche's Circus, Don Stone Circus, Haight & Chambers Circus, Anderson & Hamilton, Ad Nathan's Circus, James Robinson's Circus, Paddy Ryan Circus, Rechie Brothers' Circus, Colvin & Nathan's Circus, French & Co. Circus, Spalding & Rodgers Circus, Doris & Colvin Circus, Gregard & Belford Circus, Pullman Bros. Circus, City Pullman Dingess Circus, Dan Shelby's United States Circus, S. H. Barrett Circus, Cooper & Jackson Circus, King & Franklin, Burr Robbins, Levi J. North's Circus, Dan Costello Circus, Cather & Shalleross Shows, Dan Rice Circus, Bostock Trained Wild Animals, Wm. P. Hall Circus, Welsh Bros. & Lessig's Shows, Melville & Maginley, Lombard & Hathaway, Heber Bros. Circus, Hough & Howard Circus, Sipe's Dog and Pony Show, Sipe & Blake Dog and Pony Show, Sipe, Dollman & Blake Pony Show.<sup>44</sup>

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN M. KELLEY,

Attorney for Estates of Henry Ringling, Alf. T. Ringling.

#### FOOTNOTES FOR KELLY BRIEF

30. There were four Campbell Brothers: Ed, Virg, Doc, and Al. Lee Greer and Fred Hatfield are pictured on a great deal of Campbell advertising matter, and could easily be mistaken for the fifth and sixth brothers.

31. For supplementary information on Hall, and Barton and Bailey see "William P. Hall" by Fred Pfening, III, in the *Bandwagon* for November-December 1966.

32. Fortunately, in the last five years one major and two minor articles on Spellman's circus have appeared in the *Bandwagon*: "The United States Motorized Circus" by Joseph T. Bradbury in the January-February 1962 issue; "More About the U. S. Motorized Tableaus" by Bradbury in the July-August 1962, issue; and "More About the U. S. Motorized Tableaus" by Fred Pfening, Jr. in the September-October 1964, issue.

33. See "The M. L. Clark Wagon Show" by Homer C. Walton in the *Bandwagon* for March-April 1965, for further notes on the Clark Show. Actually, it was Floyd and Howard King, not the Clarks, who had the M. L. Clark Railroad Show in 1922.

34. The year 1891 was the first for the Walter L. Main Circus on rails. Louis E. Cooke's "Walter L. Main" in the *Bandwagon* for May-June and July-August 1967 is the best source for information on Main.

35. Frank A. Robbins used his name for his title from 1881 to 1891 and 1898, as well as the years Kelly



Rodney Harris and his 15 piece band are shown in front of a baggage wagon on the Patterson's Trained Animal Circus in 1922. Burt Wilson Collection.

mentions. Charles G. Sturtevant's article "Frank A. Robbins" in the *White Tops* for January 1930, is the only biography written on Robbins.

36. But, in 1917 and 1918 Sautelle came back with a show using his own name. In 1919 the show was called Sautelle and Demarest. After this two car show folded, part of the property was sold to the Doris Carnival, while another part was used to form the Red Lion Circus.

37. The succinctness of the section on O'Brien points out the only weakness in his argument. John O'Brien from 1862 until his death in 1889 was a major circus owner. He had as many as four shows under his control in one season. And yet, he is put on the same level as an obscure title such as Buchanan Bros. however, Kelly evidently figured that the judge would not check the correctness or logic of his case. Kelly's case is built by piling example upon example.

38. Issac A. Van Amburgh was



The Heber Bros. Circus, a wagon show out of Columbus, Ohio, toured from 1909 to 1917, under canvas in the summer and in theaters

during the winter. CHS Jack Sweetman loaned this photo, Sweetman is shown with the snare drum on the left.

never a partner of P. T. Barnum. For a few years in the middle 1860's Hyatt Frost was a partner of Barnum's to the extent that Frost placed some of his menagerie animals

in Barnum's Museum during the winter.

39. The Van Amburgh Menagerie, backed by the Flatfoots and managed by Lewis Lent, was in England from

1843 to 1845, but nothing indicates the show was in London in 1847.

40. The Louis E. Cooke articles on Main have some information on this show, as does George Chindahl's article on Main in the November-December 1956, *White Tops*.

41. The year 1903 is the correct one for the Luella Forepaugh Field Wild West. Some of the property, notably the calliope, went to the Gollmar show.

42. Before 1908 the Millers' operated their Wild West Show at fairs and expositions such as the Jamestown Exposition of 1907.

43. Lillie was a concert feature on the Sells show in 1887, and started his own outfit in 1888.

44. Some of the titles in this list are really too obscure to have lasted long enough to have even qualified to build up a good-will value; and hence lose it.

## THREE FAMOUS SHOWFOLKS DEPART

Three well known circus personalities recently died within a five week period. One began her professional life as a registered nurse around 1912, another started as a newspaper sports editor in 1906, the third at age 14 left a Catholic boy's home in 1920 to run away with the red wagons.

MABLE STARK, 79, died in Thousand Oaks, California, on April 20, 1968, after spending 57 years in the steel arena training tigers. Miss Stark was born in Princeton, Kentucky, and trained for a career in nursing in Louisville, Kentucky. While vacationing in Venice, California, she chanced to be standing before the

cage of a large tiger named King. He was owned by Al G. Barnes and was on lease to a movie company. She joined the Barnes show to work with that tiger and remained with the west coast circus until 1921.

Her early training in the big cage was under a master teacher, Louie Roth. The 1914 Barnes program listed Display No. 22, as Sampson, the aviation lion, the trainer, Miss Stark. Display No. 30, "three full-grown, black maned, ferocious African lions ride a galloping stallion," Trainer in charge, Miss Stark. The big tiger act was presented by Louie Roth, but an article in the program booklet tells of a group of tigers handled by Miss Stark, one of which was King. The 1916 program listed Mable Stark presenting the big tiger act.

The 1922 Ringling Barnum program lists an end ring wild animal act presented by Miss Stark, and in 1923 she moved to the center ring with an eight tiger act. After six years on the big show she went to Europe. While there she was contacted by the American Circus Corporation and appeared with the John Robinson Circus in 1928.

In 1929 Miss Stark presented her tiger act on the Sells-Floto Circus. In 1930 she returned to the Al G. Barnes Circus and remained there through 1936. The 1938 season found her back with the Barnes Sells-Floto show and at midseason with the Ringling Barnum features on Barnes. In the midforties she appeared with the Jimmie Woods Yankee Patterson truck circus.

In the 1950s she made a tour of Japan, while there her husband Eddie

Trees died. She returned to Thousand Oaks, California, and went back to work at the World Jungle Compound. Miss Stark remained at the Compound until her death.

ROBERT E. HICKEY, 79, died in Chicago, Illinois, on May 7, 1967. He was born in Springfield, Illinois and was sports editor of the Illinois State Register until the 'gypsy' in him started to prevail and he went on the road. From 1915 to 1921 he promoted auto races and aviation events at leading state fairs. In 1922 Mr. Hickey was signed by the Sells-Floto Circus. After the season opened he switched to the sister show John Rob-

Bob Hickey in front of the Lion & Mirror bandwagon at Rochester, Indiana, on press day just prior to the opening of the 1936 season of Cole Bros. Circus.



inson. He remained with the American Circus Corporation until 1929 when the organization was purchased by John Ringling. Hickey continued with the Floto show for the three years Tom Mix was featured by that circus. He then joined the publicity staff of the Chicago World's Fair. Bob was connected with the Standard Oil Co. Cage of Fury with Allen King's wild animal act. This act was the start of the new Cole Bros. Clyde Beatty Circus. Hickey invested \$1,000 in the new outfit and joined the press staff of the show. He made the 1935 and 1936 seasons with Adkins & Terrell, but left after his \$1000 in stock was declared worthless by the show's bondholders. He moved to the Chicago Stadium and handled the Sonja Henie Ice Show while on tour. Moving next to motion pictures, as field director for RKO-Radio Pictures. After TV hit the movie industry he returned to his first love, the ice show, this time with the Shipstad & Johnston Ice Follies.

Following retirement he lived with his brother Jack in Detroit. In recent years he has attended the Milwaukee parade and his beguiling stories were the hit of the Pfister lobby. An article in Bob's memory would not be complete without one of his famous stories. Here is one Bob told in 1932, while ahead of the Sells-Floto show.

"A few years ago Sells-Floto had a side show attraction in which a man fought a lion. One day the trainer disappeared and the manager of the side show decided to put the act on himself. A ticket seller, hearing of the plan, rushed over to General Manager Zack Terrell and told him about it. Terrell went to the side show and warned the manager that he could not fight the lion.

Wait until you are caught up at the ticket wagon, said Terrell. "We don't allow anyone who owes the show money to take needless chances."

EUGENE "ARKY" SCOTT, 62, died in Thousand Oaks, California, on April 11, 1968. Scott left a boy's home at age 14 to join a small circus. He soon found his way to Peru, Indiana, where he worked for the John Robin-



Arky Scott, taken while he was elephant boss on Cole Bros. Circus.

son Circus. A friendship with Peter Taylor led him to try wild animal training. In the animal department of the various Corporation shows he developed a special interest in elephants. When the Cole show was started in 1935 he moved to Rochester. In 1937 he became menagerie superintendent remaining in that job until the show was sold in 1949. Scott moved to the Ringling-Barnum show in 1950 as elephant boss.

"Arky" held the top spot with the big show until 1954. He then moved to the World Jungle Compound in Thousand Oaks, California. While there he handled the Compound elephants in many movies and TV appearances, including the training of "Bimbo" in the "Circus Boy" television series.

During the 1961, 1962 and 1963 seasons he was with the Rudy Bros. Circus, and then returned to Jungleland, where he was active until the last few years.

These three individuals have left their mark in the annals of circus history and will all be missed.—F. D. P. Jr.

## Question and Answer Box

### HOW MANY RAIL CARS NEEDED TO CARRY LARGE TRUCK SHOW

While not a member of CHS, I am a reader and have a question that you might perhaps be able to help me with. It is this: Not having been raised in the golden era of rail shows (1920's), I often wonder how large (on how many cars) a rail circus on 70 ft. or 72 ft. cars a modern show like Beatty-Cole or Sells & Gray would be if they operated on rails

rather than on trucks? I realize that is rather hard to answer with surety due to the fact that trucks vary greatly in size from pick-ups to semis. But for an example, would Beatty-Cole with its present physical size, make the same size train (15 cars) that it did when it left the rails in 1956? Would a truck show like the monstrous King Bros. show of 1955, which had over 70 trucks, make a 25 to 30 car show? And finally, following the same line of reasoning, would

a small show like today's Sells & Gray or King Bros. (1967 edition) make a 5 or 6 car show, assuming that they were on the 70 or 72 ft. cars that typified the shows of the 1920 to 1940 era? — William H. Schreiber

### CALLIOPE WITH JAZZ BAND

Bill Green writes asking if any readers have ever heard of a calliope being used with a dance orchestra. A friend sent Bill a tape recording (RCA LSP-2982E) of early Dixieland jazz numbers, one of which is "Tiger Rag" by the Turk Murphy band. In the Murphy selection is an excellent air calliope interlude. The recording was made in Hollywood, California on May 2, 1961.

In checking with Jazz authority William Culter, of Columbus, Ohio, we found that the Murphy selection is the only known use of a calliope.

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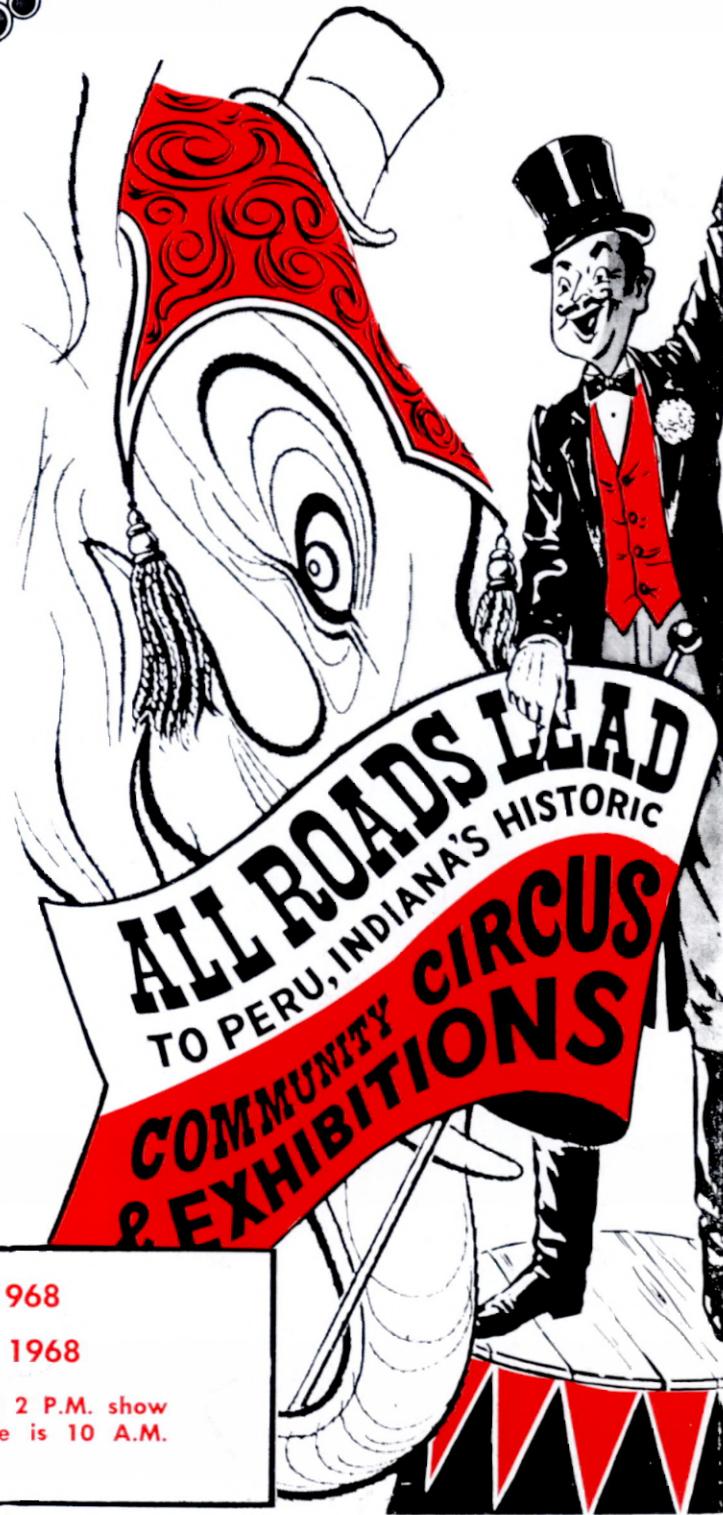
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